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rates.

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at the lowest cost
in the long run
depends on good earnings**



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ONE HUNDRED YEARS

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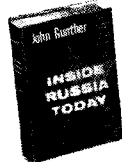
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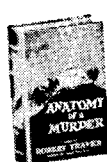
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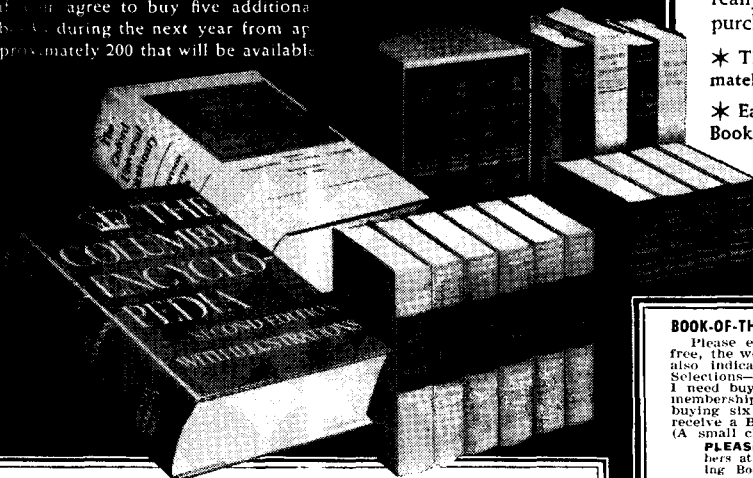
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The Atlantic Report *on the World Today*

PARIS

FRANCE at present is a nation on the defensive — an uncomfortable posture which it has enjoyed off and on for the last ten years. An American visiting Paris today may be ruffled to hear certain Frenchmen declare, both in the Assembly and outside it, that the American position toward North Africa is more harmful to France than the Bolshevik menace. He may, if he is a stout Republican, be irked to see Dulles described in a French newspaper article as “the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” of Western diplomacy. He may even be chagrined to be suddenly confronted with “*A bas Christophe Colomb* — Down with Christopher Columbus” scrawled on the wall of a hotel.

But these expressions of anti-American feeling are the inevitable reactions of a people who are locked in a struggle with the most baffling political phenomenon of the twentieth century: the relentless march of a not always enlightened and often fanatical nationalism.

It is probably fair to say that anti-Americanism, wherever it has occurred, has been as much a symptom of weakness as a sign of critical acumen. This is certainly true of France, where, ever since Suez, the country has been suffering from a mounting feeling of national frustration. The United States has undoubtedly contributed to this sentiment, by the unpredictable zigzags of Dulles’ diplomatic intuitions and by the American readiness, on occasion, to brush aside French interests in its desire to ingratiate itself with the Arab world. But if the feeling is rife in France today, it is above all because in the last three years no French government has been able to do anything effective to halt the continuing war in Algeria.

In this vital respect the short-lived Gaillard government was as spectacularly unsuccessful as its predecessors. Its fall in mid-April did not

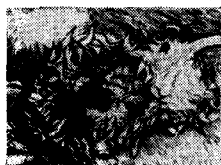
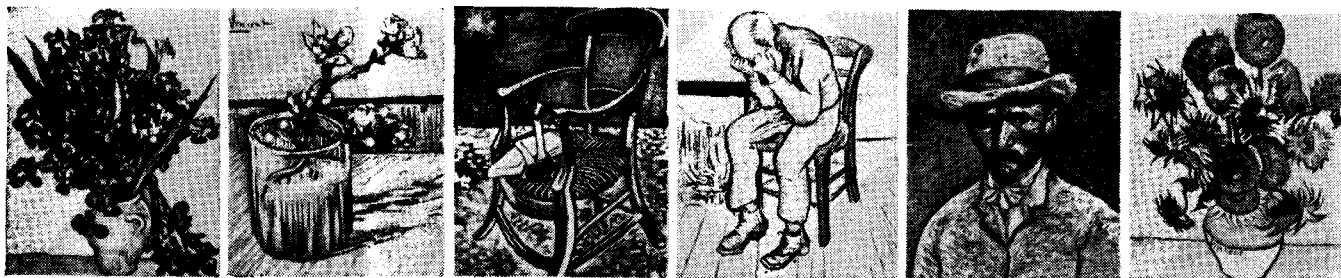
particularly surprise those who had been echoing Charles de Gaulle’s caustic New Year prophecy: “The question is not whether the Gaillard government will put an end to the war in Algeria, but whether the war in Algeria will put an end to the Gaillard government.” The General was here raising a question which now hangs like a noose over the future of the Fourth Republic: whether any French government, in the existing state of parliamentary chaos, can find a way out of the bloody impasse in North Africa.

The veneration of age

For those automatically prepared to equate youth with energy and vigor, the Gaillard ministry last November gave promise of introducing the spectacular initiatives that everyone was waiting for. Whether or not these illusions were shared by the young French Premier it is difficult to say. There are some who think he accepted the thankless task of heading a new government after five weeks of parliamentary crisis out of a sense of public duty. Others are convinced he did so because he is a quick-witted and ambitious opportunist who could not resist the temptation of becoming the youngest French Premier since the establishment of the Third Republic. The truth probably lies somewhere between these two interpretations.

Félix Gaillard’s very youthfulness proved to be a mixed blessing in a country still cursed by what has been called an “old-age complex.” Ever since the heyday of that bearded patriarch, Victor Hugo, a good many Frenchmen have tended to think that wisdom in a man comes only with the advent of white hair.

This veneration for the sagacity of old age is, of course, characteristic of old cultures — it was pronounced in ancient China — but in France it



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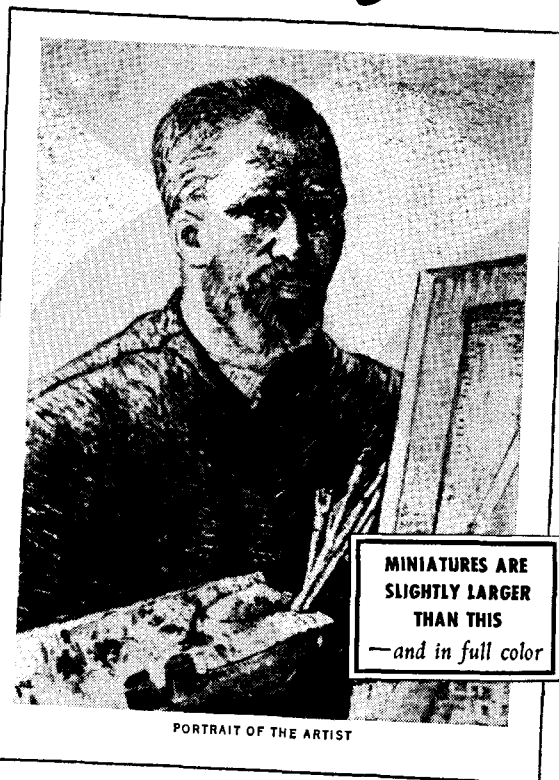
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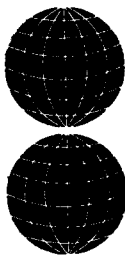
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Report on Paris



has sometimes been pushed to extremes, as, for example, in the aura of prestige which to this day envelops the forty "Immortals" of the French Academy. Only recently, Albert Camus was subjected to vituperative attacks in several French literary publications because it was felt that a writer of forty-four was intolerably young to be receiving a Nobel Prize.

Inevitably Félix Gaillard presented a standing challenge to this widespread gerontophilia. He had barely been in office a month before Georges Bidault and certain other political old-timers were letting it be known in the corridors of the Assembly that it was grotesque for an old country like France to be ruled by such a young man and that it was time to return power to the skilled hands of the veterans.

A little later another former Premier, Antoine Pinay, described the Gaillard ministry as a "government of boy scouts" — a barbed tribute to the fact that in addition to a thirty-eight-year-old Premier, it had a minister of the interior (Bourgès-Maunoury) who was a vigorous forty-three, a minister of defense (Chaban-Delmas) who was a hale and hearty forty-two, and a deputy foreign minister (Maurice Faure) who was thirty-six.

Such backstage mutterings are traditional in an Assembly made up of "six hundred anarchists," as a French writer recently described what is probably the most hypercritical parliamentary body in the world. But what surprised Félix Gaillard's admirers was the ease with which, on taking office, the stubborn finance minister of yesterday was transformed into a supple Premier.

The challenge of the premiership

No other cabinet job, of course, is exactly comparable to that of the premiership. It is far easier for a French cabinet minister to fight like a lion for the interests of his particular department than it is for a Premier to hold together a coalition of mutually suspicious rivals. The first requires a minimum of political courage, the second a maximum of diplomacy and the combined talents of a Machiavelli and a Micawber.

The seventeen different Premiers that France has had since the war have exercised these talents

in varying degrees; but only two have tried to go further and rule with something resembling Napoleonic energy — Charles de Gaulle and Pierre Mendès-France. As a result they are today the men most dreaded in the headstrong French Assembly.

To avoid a similar fate Gaillard decided to proceed more prudently when he took office last November. He deliberately passed up the psychological opportunity offered by his youthful popularity to break out of the Algerian impasse, a five-week government crisis, and an unchecked flow of foreign reserves. To do so effectively he would have had to fire Robert Lacoste, the resident minister of Algeria, shake up the local administration, and accept the mediation of Tunisia and Morocco in negotiating an end to the war.

Such a course would undoubtedly have run great risks. Replacing the Socialist Lacoste with someone like Jacques Chevallier, the liberal mayor of Algiers, might well have alienated a majority of the Socialists, whose 96 members constitute the largest non-Communist group in the 595-man Assembly. Seeking the mediation of Tunisia and Morocco would have risked alienating the right-wing Independents and so-called "Moderate Republicans," who have grown steadily more intransigent in declaring — in the face of every evidence — that "Algeria is a purely French problem."

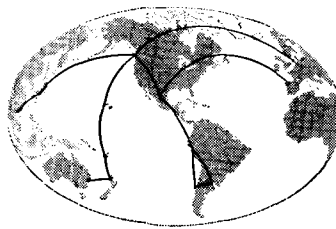
The young Premier might also have been confronted with a mass resignation of Algerian mayors and a threat of disobedience from Army officers in the North African High Command. Rather than run these risks, he decided to limit himself to the maximum allowed by the iron laws of parliamentary arithmetic, on the theory that a government which survives, no matter how impotently, is better than no government at all.

Caution has its price

There is no doubt that Gaillard had to pay heavily from the beginning for the dubious privilege of remaining in office. He had to conceal his private feelings (that Algeria is not France and that negotiations will one day be inevitable) behind a rhetorical smoke screen of tough-sounding reassurances that Algeria is and always will be French and that the "framework law," once applied, would suffice to undermine the rebellion.

He was driven to arbitrary seizures of critical Paris weeklies, simply to reassure his restive right-wing supporters (including six cabinet ministers) that his government would stand no nonsense from the "traitors" and "apostles of abandonment" who were urging a sellout in Algeria. He adopted these opportunistic tactics in the hope that

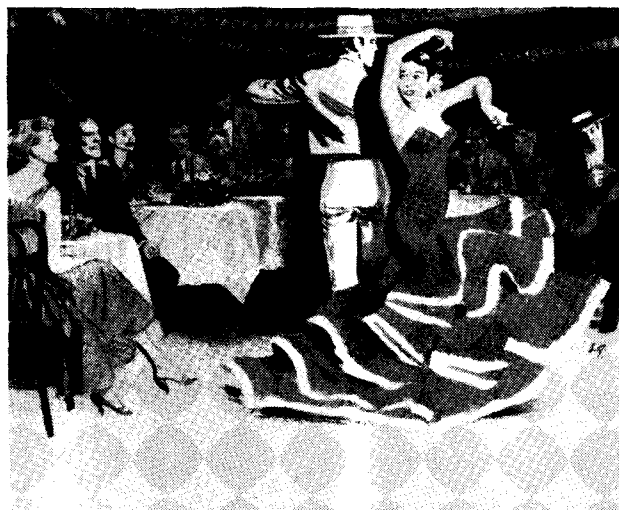
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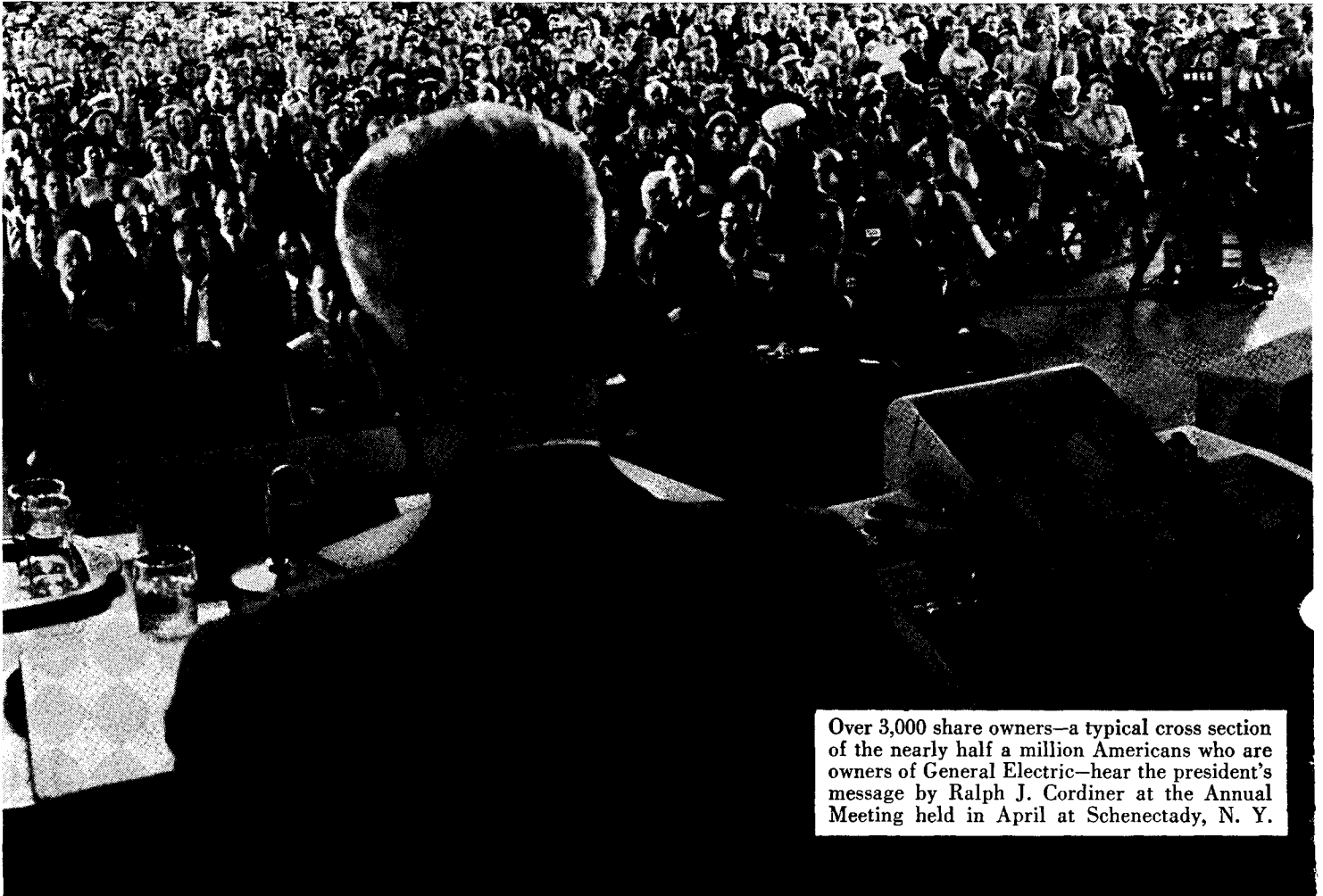
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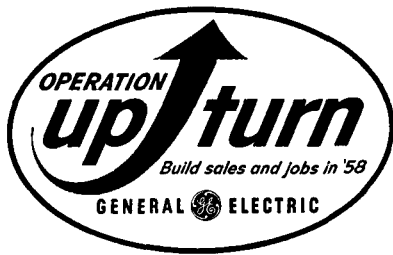
IN the light of economic circumstances today, what must be done to bring about the resurgence of business and employment that everyone wants? The situation seems ripe for a special effort: consumers have the money to spend, industry is tooled up to deliver as never before, and there are signs that the upturn is trying to get under way.

Opportunities to serve customers better

It seems to me that the most practical and effective course right now is for every business to buckle down and sell goods as never before. I mean a total effort, by every man and woman on the job, to concentrate on giving customers the best service and the best reasons to buy they ever had. King Customer needs some constructive attention. He is willing to do his part, if he is convinced that this is the time to buy. Let's convince him by showing him the best values and by giving him the best service he could ask for.

This may seem like an old-fashioned prescription to those who are shouting for massive government make-work programs and meaningless tax cuts, but we in General Electric are convinced that what happens to the economy in the remainder of this year will be largely determined by what business does to help its customers and itself. This is a do-it-yourself country. Each of us is in some way responsible for a part of the total effort, as a consumer, an employee, an investor, a voter, or whatever roles we play in economic life.

That is not to say that federal, state, and local governments do not have important work to do. There are many constructive measures that would stimulate a sound recovery without sowing the seeds of future inflation. What I am suggesting is that the government must provide the political conditions in which the economy can work its way out of the recession; but the government cannot be expected to cure the recession.



A nation-wide "do-it-yourself" program to help build sales and jobs in 1958

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A program to accelerate the upturn

This is a moment of opportunity. The slight upturn in some sectors can be turned into a definite trend, and then snowball into a steady recovery, if business will make a fresh, concerted effort.

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Remember, programs such as this, even if they are conducted by all the leading companies in the country, cannot work overnight miracles. But the tide is turning, and this is the time for a massive effort by everyone

OPERATION UPTURN...



is General Electric's program to help accelerate the upturn in business by bringing extra values and renewed confidence to customers. Its purpose is to build sales and jobs in 1958 through the enthusiasm and participation of more than a quarter million employees, their community friends and neighbors, some 45,000 suppliers, more than 400,000 firms that sell or service the company's products, and nearly half a million share owners. OPERATION UPTURN can help all of us together to contribute more effectively toward our common goals and add confidence and strength to the nation's economy.

to keep the economy moving in the right direction. All signs indicate that this country can have its biggest surge of growth in the 1960's.

Responsibilities for every citizen

In a free economy, economic growth is paced and directed by the decisions of millions of businessmen, consumers, investors, employees — indeed, by every citizen. The faith of our society is that these millions of points of initiative will produce swifter progress, with greater liberty, than any system of centralized control.

Thus, a business recession is really a test of the American people and their form of society. Their decisions — to buy, to invest, to modernize, to work more purposefully, to raise their levels of living — will determine the speed of economic advance. They will also decide whether Russia will, as she has announced, surpass us in the years ahead.

It is my opinion that the American people will bring about the upturn this year and head into a great surge of growth that will leave both the recession and the Russians far behind. This is what we Americans want. And what we want, we are willing to work for. That is all that is needed.

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Report on Paris



if France could be eased over its most immediate crisis — the loss of foreign exchange — time and patience would take care of the North African problem.

This hope, as events were soon to prove, was overoptimistic. For it assumed that the application of the "framework law" (which was not finally passed through both Assembly and Senate until after Christmas) would keep the Algerian situation from deteriorating further.

At the time Jean Monnet went to Washington in late January to plead for a loan, the Algerian rebellion had entered a momentary lull. A bomb-planting terrorist group had been broken up in Algiers, and Lacoste had been able to stroll around its boulevards on New Year's Eve to the peaceful popping of champagne corks. The French ground forces in Algeria had been reduced to 330,000, and it seemed to the optimistic that the rebellion's "last quarter of an hour" was indeed at hand.

The spring offensive

The lull, however, was illusory. It was not caused by a slackening in the ardor of the rebels, but by their retreat into Tunisia to retrain and re-equip their harassed bands for a spring offensive. When this offensive was finally launched — in the form of mass infiltrations of increasingly well-armed fellah bands — the French High Command discovered that the Eastern front and the electrified Morice Line were seriously undermanned and that it was now faced with an elusive enemy able to retreat at will into the "privileged sanctuary" of Tunisia.

Its reaction to this new situation was to stage a retaliatory raid of Sakhiat-Sidi-Youssef, rush a few crack parachute battalions to the area, and request the Defense Ministry for 40,000 more men for Algeria. The request was granted, but only after a stiff, intercabinet battle be-



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tween Jacques Chaban-Delmas, the energetic defense minister who authorized the Sakhiat raid, and Pierre Pflimlin, the finance minister, a hard-headed Alsatian who has long favored a more liberal policy in North Africa.

Pflimlin's plans for controlling the increasing inflation in France had been carefully based on the need to keep the budget deficit down to 600 billion francs, which in turn was dependent on holding the ground forces in Algeria to 330,000 men.

Thus within a few weeks of Monnet's trip to Washington, the Gaillard government was forced by the situation in North Africa to break its pledge to hold the budget deficit to a limit of \$1.4 billion.

Washington's loan backfires

The other hope on which Gaillard based his policy proved to be no less illusory: that time and patient pressure would suffice to modify the bellicose intransigency of the right-wing ultranationalists on whose support he depended. Washington's \$650 million loan, in fact, accomplished precisely the opposite result.

Barely ten weeks after the loan was granted, the French right-wing Independents and Moderates expressed their gratitude by torpedoing the Gaillard government, which had obtained it. Gaillard's crime was to have accepted a letter from President Eisenhower urging continued faith in Robert Murphy's "good offices." This was considered by the parliamentary right wing as tantamount to dictation to the French government. Pathological as the reaction may seem, it does not excuse Washington's lack of foresight and finesse in trying to compensate for its imprudent generosity in January with an ill-timed admonition in April.

The neurotic anti-Americanism and xenophobia which brought on the downfall of the Gaillard government are perhaps the most alarming developments in France today. They have infected public debates with an element of irrational passion and blind chauvinism which bears a disturbing resemblance to our own McCarthyist hysteria. Above all, they have reduced French parliamentary life to a state of virtual paralysis.

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The Atlantic Report WASHINGTON



DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER, Washington long ago decided, doesn't like a fuss and abhors a fight. And his record in the White House has supported that view of the soldier-statesman. Hence it was only natural that the skeptics were in the vast majority when this spring he asked Congress to let him "modernize" the vast and complex entity called the Pentagon.

But some of the skeptics began to waver when the President declared that he meant to fight, and some of them were almost convinced he meant it when in his speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors he took on the powerful Democratic chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Georgia's 74-year-old Carl Vinson, long the Navy's hero in the halls of Congress.

When the President decided to do that, he knew he was also up against a coalition of senior and ranking members of his own party, men like Senator Styles Bridges, the ranking Republican in the Senate, and Representative Leslie C. Arends, the GOP whip in the House. And he knew they had not only Vinson but Senate Democratic whip Mike Mansfield on their side. Mansfield has served in the Navy, the Army, and the Marines, but his partiality runs to the Marine Corps, and he is always wary lest any reorganization swallow up that proud service.

In the view of the overwhelming number of Washington observers who have no special service ax to grind, the President was correct in saying that "the waging of war by separate ground, sea, and air forces is gone forever" and that unity in planning, in Pentagon command, and in field combat command can be rejected only "at deadly peril."

The Air Force is essentially behind the Eisenhower proposals; the Army is generally behind them; the Navy is the source of most of the service opposition; and the Marines are technically part of the Navy. But despite the rather severe clamp Defense Secretary McElroy had put on civilian or uniformed service leaders who would oppose the

modernization proposals, the fact is that it is in Congress, not in the Pentagon, that the opposition is most fierce.

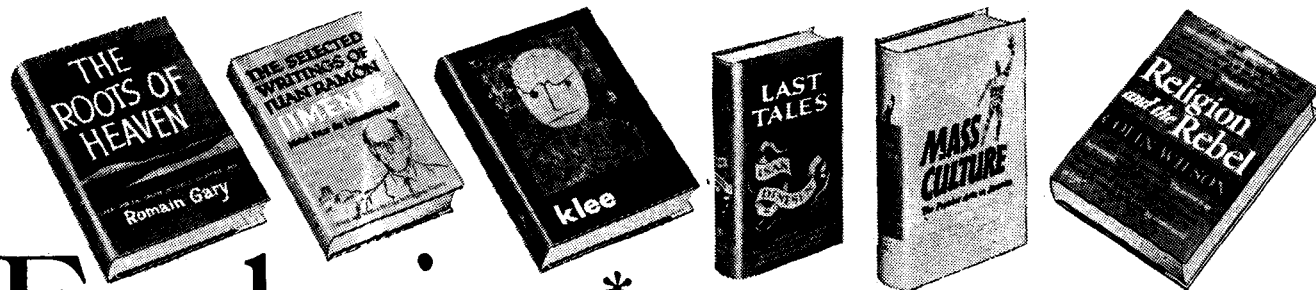
The central theme of this opposition is that the President would destroy the one real control that Congress has over the military establishment, its constitutional power of the purse. If this were indeed true, the reorganization should be rejected, for the military labyrinth is so vast and self-contained that only through the annual appropriation battles can the Congress catch a glimpse of what is going on and exert a measure of control.

But this issue is largely phony. The President has asked only the right to switch a fragment of the massive Pentagon budget from one service to another, or from one activity to another. And even here he managed, in a rather clever move, to head off some of the opposition by leaving until next year a showdown on just what percentage of Pentagon funds he could switch, doing so by saying that he would wait until the fiscal 1960 budget is presented next January.

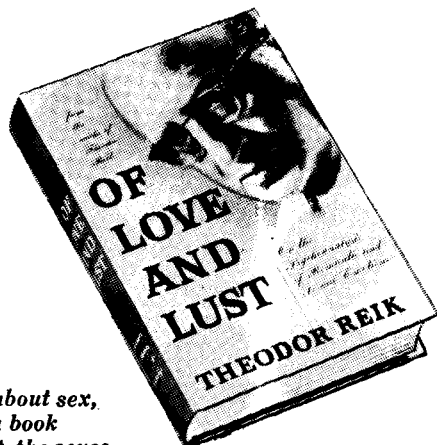
The chain of command

The battle this year, then, will swirl around the chain-of-command issue. In the field, as the President has said, unity of command is in many cases a reality already, though sometimes more in name than in spirit. The controversy is likely to center on the proposal to turn the three one-time cabinet secretaries for Army, Navy, and Air Force into housekeeping bosses, transferring all command functions from them and their staffs to the defense secretary and the joint chiefs of staff alone. They would then operate directly by orders to the seven geographic commands plus the world-wide Strategic Air Command and the special weapons command.

It is difficult from outside the Pentagon to judge the efficacy of some of the provisions in the President's plan. Without doubt the success or failure of some of the changes, if made, will depend far less on the Pentagon organization chart than on the personalities of those in authority.



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Report on Washington



The Pentagon modernization in Congress is clearly one of the major issues this year. But it is only a beginning. The revamped Pentagon chart at best will be only the framework for something far more vital: a revamped American politico-military policy.

The basic need is to create a new military strategy and new political objectives and tactics in tune with the ever-changing nuclear age and the Communist version of peaceful competition with the democracies.

Nuclear testing

Edward Teller, the brilliant and eloquent scientist who has been battling against any halt to nuclear weapons testing, said not long ago that in the face of the nuclear standoff, the Administration's massive retaliation

policy has become "more and more unrealistic." Teller was arguing that testing must go on to perfect the small, so-called "clean" tactical nuclear weapons, to give the United States a limited nuclear war capability.

In this argument more is involved besides mutations of bone cancer or leukemia caused by radioactive fallout from nuclear testing. What is at stake is our national security and the survival of the democracies. And in the argument, the political lines in Washington and elsewhere are thoroughly mixed.

One of the best cases for the Administration policy of continued testing has been made by Louis J. Halle, a University of Virginia professor who served under Dean Acheson on the State Department's policy planning staff. In his *Choice for Survival*, Halle argues that each of the two major powers has everything to gain in preventing an all-out nuclear war and that a totalitarian regime, being uninfluenced by the play of emotional public opinion and the survival of the MacArthurian "no

substitute for victory" thesis, is more able than are the democracies to fight limited nuclear war.

Halle's argument is — like Acheson's and Secretary Dulles' as well — that we must get away from unobtainable objectives of an unlimited nature, from Roosevelt's "unconditional surrender," to the initial Korean War aim of restoring the *status quo ante*. He suggests that man's view of atomic weapons might be far different from today's cringing fear and hysteria had small "clean" tactical weapons been available and used by the Western allies in 1939 to break up the Nazi blitzkrieg against France and the Low Countries.

Halle's book is another example of the heartening number of non-government thinkers trying to help form a politico-military policy for America today. Neil McElroy's task will be to create such a policy, given the Pentagon framework in which to make the military side of it operate successfully.

McElroy and Dulles are a far more harmonious team than were Dulles and Charles E. Wilson. But the time now irretrievably lost has seen the erosion of America's political position in almost every area of the free world, and this will make the hammering out of a Pentagon-State Department joint policy all the more difficult. Whether it can be done is far from certain, given Eisenhower's reluctance to plunge into the problem himself and given Dulles' refusal to delegate any substantial part of his own massive authority. Still, it is a remarkable fact that it was the Secretary of State, not a Pentagon official, who first publicly advanced — in an October, 1957, article in *Foreign Affairs* — the doctrine of limited war based on the still uncreated small nuclear weapons.

Greatly inhibiting the development of such a doctrine is the Soviet propaganda pressure to end nuclear tests. The problem is compounded by the emotions aroused over the effects of testing and is further confused by the Administration's reluctance to make public the scientific facts.

The role of the scientist

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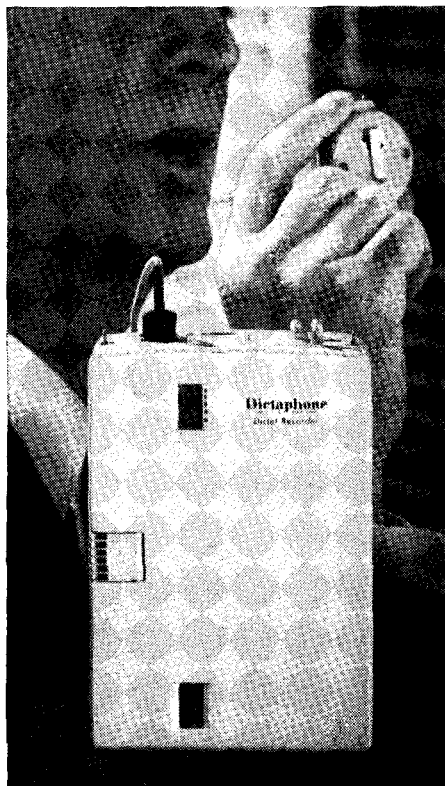
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Report on Washington



scientists have strayed far from their own well-ordered laboratories into the confused world of international political reality, a venture into the sunlight which has blinded many of them. In a single week, Washington heard Teller on the one side and Hans Bethe, the equally world-famous physicist, on the other side of the nuclear testing argument.

Bethe, incidentally, was the first scientist favoring suspension of the tests who could speak with the authority of having been on the inside of the Administration's examination of that issue. He was the chairman of the panel called together by James R. Killian, Jr., to ascertain the facts involved in the inspection and control problem of the test suspension and other aspects of any possible East-West arms agreement.

Both Teller and Bethe, and many other of their colleagues on both sides of the test argument, have extrapolated from their own scientific knowledge to make political judgments. The result is that the politicians and the public at large have been thoroughly confused.

The first task, then, assuming the Pentagon modernization battle is won to any considerable degree, will be for McElroy, Dulles, and their associates to call on the scientists for the scientific facts and the scientific extrapolations. Then they must make their own judgments, and explain them publicly, in terms of the real world of international affairs based on the sound scientific facts of the nuclear age.

Lower taxes?

When members of Congress found, while they were back home during the Easter recess, that there was no overwhelming pressure on them for an immediate tax cut — the prevailing sentiments they reported were apathy and uncertainty — the magic tax date on the Capitol calendar became June 30. That is the date when

the present corporate income tax rate and existing excise levies on just about everything will revert to the lower pre-Korea figures or disappear entirely, unless there is affirmative action by Congress with the President's signature as well.

More and more one hears at the Capitol the phrase, "I'm an excise tax cut man myself." This comes not only from those who represent Michigan or other hard-hit manufacturing areas. It comes also from men deeply troubled over the continued reluctance of the economy to bottom out, as the economists say; men who feel that a cut in withholding taxes is less an incentive to increased buying of automobiles or television sets or a thousand other major items than would be a cut or even abolition of excise taxes. And the more this kind of talk is heard, the more reluctant is the prospective auto purchaser to buy a new car, for he realizes that there is the possibility of a 5 or even a 10 per cent saving a few months from now.

In fact, a case can be made for the belief that too much such talk and too much delay in a decision one way or the other helps feed the recession and negates the housing, highway, public works, unemployment insurance, and other measures which have already been passed or are in the works.

Mood of the Capital

The Democrats have grown increasingly confident, as spring turned into summer, that they will benefit immensely at the polls in November from the long economic slide, and there are few Republicans in Washington who will deny it.

The President's repeatedly expressed worry lest too much pump priming bring on a new dose of inflation has some support from the professional economists but practically none from the politicians in either party, especially from those who must face the voters this year.

This is why, of course, Senate Democratic Leader Lyndon Johnson has taken the tack that there is an "equal obligation to keep a bridle on recession before it runs away," and why he needles the President by calling for "confident action, not just confident talk."

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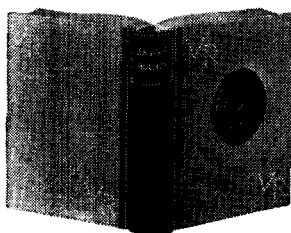
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The Atlantic Report CANADA



THE Conservative landslide in the Canadian election on March 31 made history. Never before has a political party been smitten so grievously as was the Liberal Party under its brand-new leader, Lester B. Pearson. The Conservative Party not only won 209 seats of a house of 265, it wiped out Liberal representation in six of the country's ten provinces, including all of western Canada. It got 53 per cent of the popular vote, to the Liberals' 36 per cent. Indeed, the only parallel in modern history was the Landon debacle in 1936.

Followers of Prime Minister John Diefenbaker cracked the historic Liberal citadel of Quebec wide open. The Liberal majority of 10,000 to 15,000 a year ago was transformed into Conservative gains. The Conservatives obliterated the Social Creditors in Alberta and British Columbia. The Liberal Party, which had a 163 to 57 margin over the Conservatives before the June, 1957, election, was reduced to only 47 members. The once cocky Socialist party, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, saw all its top leaders beaten in what were regarded as the safest seats in the country and its strength cut from 25 to 8.

The bitterest taste for the so-called reform parties was the way in which the Conservatives won 16 out of 17 seats in Saskatchewan — where since 1944 the CCF has been in complete control — and took all 17 seats in Alberta, where the Social Credit monetary reformers have owned the provincial government since 1935. All this happened with whopping majorities in seats in which Conservative candidates usually ran last. And it happened quietly in an issue-free election in which the public seemed completely unconcerned.

For Pearson, who came fresh to the Liberal leadership from a distinguished career at the United Nations as Canada's top spokesman, it was a bitter blow. Yet the gathering disaster for the Liberals was apparent from the first days of the Liberal convention in Ottawa last January, at which Pearson was elected to succeed the Rt. Hon. Louis S. St. Laurent, Liberal leader and Prime Minister from 1948 to 1957.

Under Liberal administration, from 1935 to 1957, the country prospered mightily. Its population grew from 11 million to 16.5 million. Its trade expanded with the forced-draft development of Canadian industry. Liberal fiscal policies encouraged foreign investment, and American investment in Canada rose from a pre-war \$3 billion to \$13 billion. As a direct result of this flow of capital northward, Canadian heavy industry, manufacturing, and natural resources development came substantially under U.S. ownership and control.

The tide of nationalism

Public reaction to the boom was reflected in easy Liberal victories at the polls. But the longer it lasted, the more convinced did the Liberals become that they had found the secret of eternal power. They became arrogant in office. They let political fences decay. The Liberal administration did what was "good for the country" and not what was politically beneficial. It antagonized old-age pensioners with picayune pension increases, it distributed tax reductions with bad grace, it was timid in protesting to Washington against trade policies that hurt Canadian farmers. Its engineers, not party politicians, dictated policy on public works.

Above all, the Liberals ignored the tide of nationalism that was slowly but surely rising in Canada. They seemed to be more concerned with the United Nations than with pressing Canadian problems.

During their twenty-two years in the wilderness, the Conservatives saw many seemingly potent issues collapse in their hands. They tried leader after leader with little success. Through a process of elimination they ran through an imposing list and came to John Diefenbaker, an able 62-year-old lawyer from Saskatchewan, who captured the leadership of the party in 1957.

When the election was called in June, 1957, the Liberals had an overall majority of about 70 seats, and were convinced they would win easily.

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Report on Canada

So indeed were most Conservatives. Diefenbaker himself, however, took off across the country in a "Give 'em hell" Harry Truman type campaign. His main target was the way in which the Liberals through the years had knuckled under to the United States. He blasted American control of Canadian industry, hit Canadian dependence upon American capital, denounced the billion-dollar annual trade deficit with the United States. These, coupled with biting criticism of a dozen domestic issues, cut so deeply into Liberal strength as to defeat the government.

For eight months, however, Diefenbaker had to rule with a minority government. St. Laurent retired, and Pearson was elected leader of the Liberals in January. In his first major speech in the House of Commons as leader, he presented Diefenbaker with a perfect excuse to hold an election.

The Conservative arsenal

Instead of challenging the Conservatives to go to the country on the unemployment problem, Pearson almost was laughed out of business when he demanded that the government resign and give the reins back to the Liberals *without having an election*. Get out, he said, in effect, and give the Liberals a chance to solve the unemployment crisis.

Pearson blamed the Conservatives for antagonizing the United States and destroying Canadian-U.S. trade. He blamed them for unemployment, which has reached 500,000, the highest point since before the war. He blamed them for destroying confidence in the Canadian economy.

Diefenbaker's answer was to reach, dramatically, into his desk and extract a hitherto secret 1957 report by government economists. It warned the Liberals, early last year, that a recession was imminent and that anti-inflation controls should be eased. As he quoted chapter and

verse from this report, which he said had been deliberately suppressed by the Liberals, Diefenbaker rose to heights of effective oratory seldom seen in the House of Commons.

In the campaign that followed, there were no real issues. There was only a quiet but growing Canadian nationalism, which has become apparent since the American ownership of so large a share of Canadian industry was brought out into the open. In the June, 1957, election campaign, this was closely akin to anti-Americanism. All the best issues which the Conservatives seized upon had strong American coloration. It was from this fact, and Diefenbaker's expressed aim of diverting 15 per cent of Canada's imports from the United States to Britain, that the Liberals drew their main texts at their January convention.

The Conservatives, they said, had created unemployment by destroying American confidence in Canada. If Canada was the best U.S. customer, the United States was Canada's best customer, too. Each was important to the other, and ill will was a luxury neither could afford. "We put it very simply," Pearson said after his leadership victory in January. "We think we know how to get along with the Americans, and the Conservatives do not."

The Liberals sought to use an American "slap down" at Canada, in Commerce Secretary Weeks's phrase, as a club with which to belabor the Tories. They tried to sell the obviously preposterous notion that the U.S. imposition of a 15 per cent import reduction on Canadian oil was in retaliation for Diefenbaker's proposal that 15 per cent of Canada's imports be diverted to the Commonwealth from the United States. The strategy backfired.

A dreamer of great dreams

The Conservatives, in this campaign, successfully converted the anti-American overtones of the 1957 campaign into the 1958 pro-Canadianism which swept the entire nation. Diefenbaker said out loud what many Canadians have felt. He not only preached the building of a Canadian New Jerusalem, he launched a great public works program to get it started. In the Maritime Provinces he poured money

into the financing of steam power plants to breathe some life into a dying coal industry. In Ontario he dwelt upon the necessity of using Canadian raw materials in Canada to manufacture goods for Canadian use and raise Canada's standard of living. In the west he gave the go-ahead to the long controversial \$250 million Saskatchewan river dam for power and irrigation. He outlined plans for pushing back frontiers and opening up the north. He appointed a Royal Energy Commission to develop a national energy use policy.

All this was done with what Pearson scoffed at as "the histrionic approach" to public speaking. Dieffenbaker is the last of the old-time spellbinders. To the cynics, his style resembles that of a high school Mark Antony declaiming over Caesar's body. Yet even those who know the gestures can still be moved by the eloquence of the man. He can project his personality, get across to listeners better than any Canadian politico in two generations.

Pearson, on the other hand, in his best being quietly studious in a sincere search for a formula that will postpone a problem which it will not solve. It was the high skill he developed as a formula fashioner that won him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957. The ingrained habit of mind acquired in thirty years immersion in international affairs made such an achievement possible, but it ruined him in the general election.

Election promises

The Liberal campaign became a futile search for a glamorous formula that would catch the attention of the Canadian electorate. The attempt to capitalize on Canadian friendship with the United States blew up when it put the Liberals in the position of being allied with Americans against Canadian Conservatives.

Pearson proposed a multimillion dollar program of scholarships for university students. That was a dud. He came out for income tax exemptions for young people during their first two years of marriage. He proposed various cuts in taxation which were complicated enough to alienate even the chartered accountant vote. He proposed an equally complicated agricultural policy that impressed

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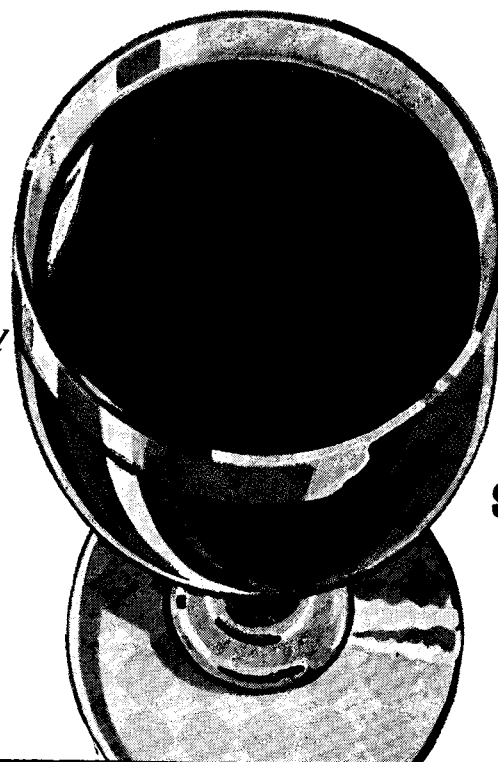
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Report on Canada



farmers only with its impracticality. Yet even proposals which attracted attention were rendered harmless by a single Tory question: "They promise it now, but they voted against it last year. Why didn't they do it when they were in power?"

The Conservatives, in eight months, could point to a long list of election promises fulfilled. They had raised the old-age pensions; they got a study going of the United States Social Security Act, pumped money into the Maritimes, enacted floor price legislation, extended unemployment insurance. These token payments, as it were, convinced thousands of uncommitted Canadians that Diefenbaker's party was entitled to "see what it can do with a working majority." This, coupled with Diefenbaker's basic appeal to Canadian nationalism, gave the Conservatives the greatest parliamentary strength in Canadian history. How will that strength be used?

Second thoughts

After the election, Canadian second thoughts were that the victory had been too one-sided, that a better result would have been a Conservative win by a narrow margin. On the other hand, it is gradually dawning on people that there is more to this election result than mere numbers. Almost since Confederation in 1867, Canada has been ruled by the bloc which has been able to attract the most outside support. The Liberals had the solid French-Canadian bloc from Quebec. The Conservatives had a solid English-Canadian bloc from Ontario. Under Canada's system a responsible government power resides in the caucus of the government party, not on the floor of Parliament. The cabinet must always obtain the support of its members in caucus before it takes its measures before Parliament.

Despite the debate in the House of Commons, enactment of government measures is certain. When the

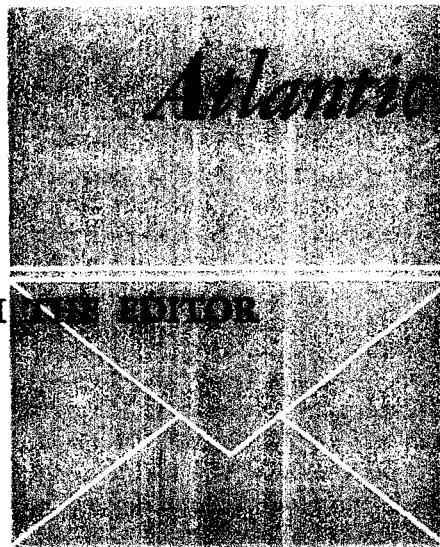
caucus was dominated by either of the blocs, the influence of less populous areas diminished. That was accentuated when regional discontent sent minority parties to Parliament from Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. These provinces went largely unrepresented in government caucus for many years.

This year, Ontario elected 68 Conservatives, the four western provinces and the northern territories 66, Quebec elected 50, and the Maritimes 25. Thus no one region, no one interest, and no one racial group can dominate the others. Greater protection will be extended to Canadian industry, as Ontario demands, but it will have to be done in such a way that it does not raise a storm in western Canada and in the Maritimes.

Canadian recession

The Canadian recession was more severe than that of the United States this winter. Yet because its roots are buried in American head offices of Canadian branch plants, fiscal cures will be difficult for the new government. Canadian recovery will depend on the recovery of the American economy, because American industry in its thinking and planning treats its Canadian subsidiaries as an integral part of its domestic operation. The companies which overexpanded their American plant capacity did the same in Canada. The same results followed—a glut of the market. Now pressures to reduce capital expenditures which operate in the United States also operate in Canada.

Nevertheless, the Canadian government is bound to take vigorous action, both by way of tax cuts and by public works to cut unemployment to manageable proportions. There will be, naturally, greater stress put upon creating jobs in Canada by using Canadian materials and energy. Greater emphasis will be placed upon investment by Canadians in Canadian enterprise. The way in which Canadian nationalism develops from here will depend on the success of the first measures taken. But of this there is no doubt: for the next five years Canada will tend to look inward for solutions to its problems as they arise. The consequence may be a new environment in which American business must live in Canada.



Repartee

LETTERS TO AND FROM

The tyranny of art

SIR:

It is wonderful and exciting to know that the awareness of the true purpose and value of art has not slipped away completely. East Gombrich's article "The Tyranny of Abstract Art" in the April *Atlantic* was printed as if in answer to a prayer. I feel as though I were thrown a life raft in a rushing tide.

REGINA MAHOY
Alameda, Calif.

SIR:

I read with considerable disappointment the Gombrich article, which undertakes to explore abstract art. Certainly, it seems to me, the *Atlantic* has lowered its standards to admit such sensational material to its pages. What disturbs me is the journalistic tone of this writing. Mr. Gombrich sets us straw men in the shape of the fictitious artists, Dolan and Dranseb, which he then demolishes to his own satisfaction. A more serious and scholarly approach to the problem would be to write about real artists rather than imaginary ones.

As a reader and friend of the *Atlantic*, I wish to deplore this intemperate, emotion-riddled, and biased writing. As a working artist myself, I can only say to Mr. Gombrich that I will not easily submit to this latest attempt to tyrannize the artist.

LAWRENCE KUPFERMAN
Natick, Mass.

SIR:

Mr. Gombrich makes too much of the "Trebla Dransebs" of our time. Had he titled his article, "Min-

compoops and Charlatans in Contemporary Art," and had he confined himself to the observation that foolish critics, greedy dealers, naïve museum directors often, too often, promote pseudo artists at the expense of both the serious practitioners of the arts and a gullible, aesthetically untrained public, I should not take issue with him. While there are many whose wretched canvases have done much to discredit abstract art, must one be blind to the possibilities and advantages of abstract art per se?

Mr. Gombrich understandably is upset by the amount of dreadful work produced today in the abstract idiom and by the accolades awarded to frauds. But is he not, as a historian, aware that the situation was not so different sixty or seventy years ago, when the Besnards carried away far more prizes than any of the better artists? In one history of French art, Besnard is listed among the Impressionists, and his biography is assigned far more space than the biographies of Degas, Monet, Renoir, or Pissarro. Yet today Besnard is forgotten.

Mr. Gombrich has a duty to detect Renoirs and Monets of our time amidst the Besnards who, I admit, are often more successful and certainly more noisy than the true artists. This is a more taxing, but also more useful, task than bewailing the low taste of our time.

Is this taste as low as Mr. Gombrich fears? And does a tyranny of abstract art exist? Looking through *New Art in America*, a large illustrated volume edited by several museum directors and published here last year. I find that among the fifty

painters selected as representatives of the twentieth century, only eight or nine can be classed among the abstractionists.

Mr. Gombrich admits to liking Kandinsky, Mondriaan, Nicolson, yet he also says that even the best abstract canvas never lifts him as high as does "some work of great music." I strongly suspect that he is thinking of Mozart or Bach. But wouldn't it be more fair to compare twentieth-century paintings with twentieth-century music? If art were limited to things "easy to be understood" (to borrow from Mr. Gombrich's quotation from Saint Paul), there would be no development in art.

ALFRED WERNER
Arts Magazine
New York City

SIR:

"The Tyranny of Abstract Art" brings to mind a pertinent incident from my experience. It connects specifically with the line from the article "... the room with these abstracts is likely to witness and encourage the most stimulating conversations." I report this as an incident, not a critique:

A friend who is entranced by abstract art rented one floor of his duplex apartment to two elderly teachers from the Middle West, who came to Columbia University for a summer course. He told me, "The ladies seemed stunned by the large abstract painting over the fireplace, but I know that they'll learn to love it as they live with it."

Two weeks later he advised me unhappily, "My tenants asked me to remove the abstract painting, said



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they couldn't stand it. I replaced it with a conventional etching of a farm scene."

Soon after that, I was visiting my friend when there was a hesitant knock on the door. The two ladies entered apologetically, carrying the etching. Said one, "We'd like to have the abstract painting back, if it's not too much trouble." My friend jumped up ecstatically, flashed a look of triumph at me, and fetched the painting.

He said to his tenants, "I knew that subconsciously you had learned to love this painting, and missed it when it was removed."

"We certainly missed it," the second little lady explained. "You see, we frequently invite new acquaintances at the university to tea. When we had the abstract painting on the wall, some visitor would always exclaim immediately, 'What does that monstrosity mean?' Then everyone would be talking excitedly right away. But when the painting was removed, it was often difficult to get conversation started."

SAMM SINCLAIR BAKER
Larchmont, N.Y.

Red China's trade

SIR:

The Report on Red China's Trade in the April *Atlantic* was excellent. It was very interesting to see how Red China bartered with India through the agreement of 1951 and other similar treaties with Ceylon and Indonesia. I should like to bring you a little more up to date on Communist China's barter deals.

In the summer of 1955, while the docks in Rangoon, Burma (one of the first Asian nations to recognize the new regime of China), were still overflowing with a surplus of cement from China, Burma found itself confronted with another problem. In order to fulfill its barter obligations to export 600,000 tons of rice to China, it had no surplus to sell to India, Indonesia, Pakistan, and British Malaya. Unable to purchase rice from Burma, Pakistan was forced to turn to China, which had plenty of bartered rice from Burma on hand and was only too happy to part with it for hard cash. Burma's premier, U Nu, had this to say: "Anybody who goes for barter deals is out of his mind."

This all happened after Peiping had sent its trade delegations to many countries, and everywhere

they spoke of trade, peace, economic development. What Communist China did to U Nu's Burma in 1955 certainly does not give a new look to Peiping barter policies.

GEORGE TSENG
Political Science Department
Baylor University
Waco, Tex.

Mt. Rushmore, South Dakota

SIR:

May a Canadian be one of the first of your readers to point out a curious error in that admirable *Atlantic* "First," "Beat Down Frigid Rome" by Esther Wagner (April *Atlantic*). After an unforgettable sight of Borglum's Mt. Rushmore memorial to four of your greatest presidents, I could never place it anywhere but in *South Dakota*.

I hope we may have many more of Mrs. Wagner's stories.

REVEREND CANON A. H. PRIEST
Toronto, Ont., Canada

Teacher certification

SIR:

Over the years, I have read your magazine and built up a feeling of confidence in the material you chose to publish. I was dismayed, therefore, to read the article in the April issue entitled "What Strangles American Teaching" by Lydia Stout.

I feel you have broken faith with the thousands of readers who have been looking to your pages for reliable, authentic writing. The ramblings of Mrs. Stout obviously stem from her frustration in not gaining acceptance of her own notions of what should be enacted by a state legislature.

J. L. McCASKILL, Administrative Director
National Association of Secretaries
of State Teachers Associations
Washington, D.C.

SIR:

As an ex-teacher in public schools who suffered with many others on the educationists' treadmill, I should like to commend you and Lydia Stout. The article will undoubtedly arouse the lions. Mrs. Stout is unquestionably correct. But whether parents and interested citizens can become sufficiently aroused to pressure education courses back into perspective seems doubtful.

In Ohio the law required 18 semester hours of education courses for graduation. The college I attended required 30 semester hours — and

only 24 in a major field. It was not possible to obtain a liberal arts education and graduate with a degree in education. Ironically, one can teach in college without these courses. In fact, a degree in education was a disadvantage in finding a college teaching position.

RICHARD S. ALDRICH
Sandusky, Ohio

SIR:

The article by Mrs. Stout on American teaching certainly hit the nail on the head.

I am sure that you are going to receive all sorts of complaints from the "professional educators." But don't worry; the American people, when they know the facts, are fully in support of Mrs. Stout's position. Only most of them are not organized, and their protestations are inadequate when confronted with the powerful education lobby.

The sooner we return our schools to their basic purpose of training the mind rather than adjusting the personality, the better off we will be.

JOHN R. PATTERSON
Buffalo, N.Y.

SIR:

It is difficult to express adequately our appreciation to you for having published Mrs. Stout's excellent and forceful article. In it she expresses what we in the colleges of liberal arts have known for many years — documented in such a striking manner.

It is our hope that such articles will be instrumental in reducing the number of education courses that can be taken in college, even on the Ph.D. level, to something which will represent a judicious ratio between subject matter and method and will in some way begin to wrest the control of educational philosophy from the very special group of "educators" who have so woefully neglected the intellectual development of the better group of our secondary school students.

WALTER MEIDEN
The Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio

"What Strangles American Teaching" by Lydia Stout in our April issue evoked many letters from teachers and other *Atlantic* readers, pro and con. We propose to publish in the July *Atlantic* a selection from these letters which will show how the issues raised by Mrs. Stout are regarded in other parts of the United States.

—THE EDITORS

Who Says The Pope CAN'T BE WRONG?



"The Pope," Bill Brown declared, "is just a man—like you and me. How can you Catholics believe he can't be wrong?"

Bill's challenge came as no surprise to his Catholic friend, Ed. Johnson. For Ed. knew, as most Catholics do, that the doctrine of Papal infallibility sounds presumptuous and incredible to people who do not understand it.

"Remember, Bill," he replied, "what Christ promised Peter? . . . that His Church would be divinely protected against error—that '*the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*' That promise, Bill, was to the first Pope, and all the Popes have been his direct and lawful successors, heirs to the same promise."

But, Ed. went on to explain, Christ did not make Peter incapable of human error. And Papal infallibility does not mean that the Pope is always right in all things. It does not mean his freedom from all human shortcomings. Nor does it make him an unerring authority on science, the state of the nation, or how to build a house.

"The Pope," Ed. continued, "is divinely preserved from error only when acting in his official capacity as successor to St. Peter, and promulgating to the whole Church a decision on a matter of faith and morals. Even then, three conditions must apply:

"(1) The Pope must be speaking *ex cathedra* . . . that is, from the Chair of Peter, in his official capacity; (2) the decision must be for the *whole* Church; (3) it must be on a matter of *faith* and *morals.*"

The Pope, of course, has no authority to introduce a new doctrine. He is not the author of revelation—only its interpreter and expounder. He has no power to distort a single word of Scripture, no more right than you or I to break a divine law. His function is

to protect and preserve divine truth and hand it down unchanged to future generations.

"Today, Bill, as you know," Ed. Johnson concluded, "the Christian world is divided by numerous differences of doctrine. It is a great assurance for Catholics to be able to depend upon the teaching and interpretation of one whose office is of apostolic origin and divinely protected against error."

If you would like to know more about the Pope, the origin of his office, the doctrine of infallibility, why his headquarters is in Rome, and other interesting facts, write for our free pamphlet. It will be sent in a plain wrapper—and nobody will call on you. Ask for Pamphlet No. B-4.

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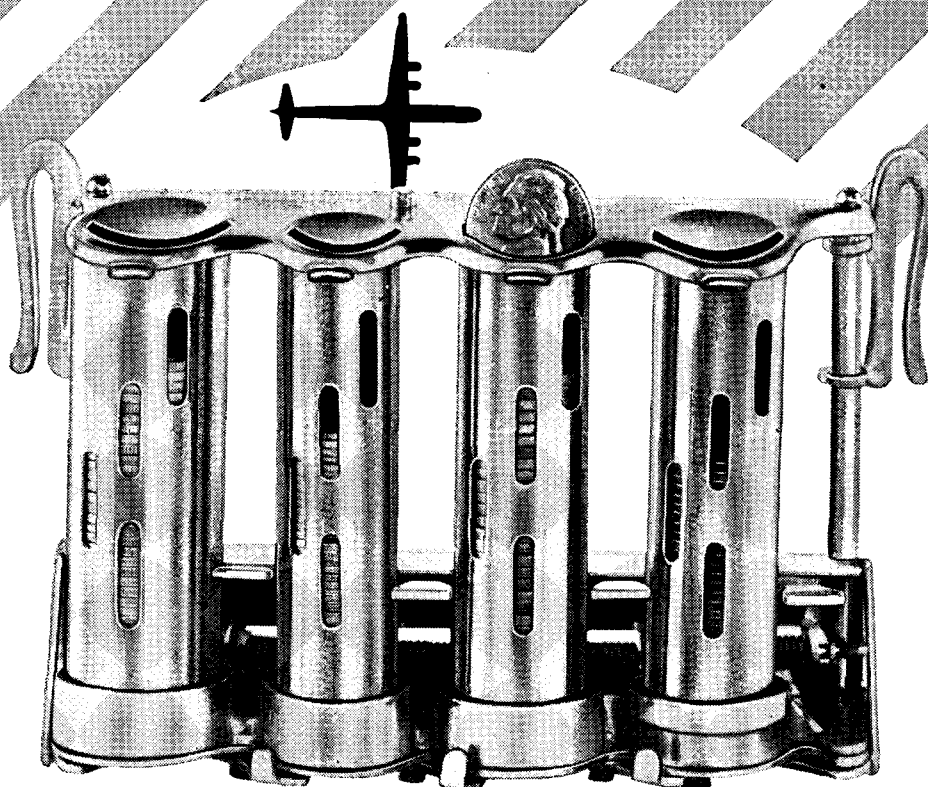
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THE ATLANTIC



FRANCE BY JEAN COCTEAU

The living embodiment of French versatility, JEAN COCTEAU has in his more than seventy years been successively poet, novelist, artist, stage designer, movie director, essayist, dramatist, and critic. He is now a venerated member of the French Academy.

FRANCE is in perpetual struggle with herself. This is what strikes me about her. The great French tradition is a tradition of anarchy. Disorder allows France to thrive just as order is indispensable to others. People amuse me who are afraid that France is turning into a village. She has always been one. She was one under Louis XV. A village with its *Café du Commerce*, its newspaper kiosk, and its *bureau de tabac*, where everyone discusses and argues. From this endless argument is born the glow of that soft, intense light which Guillaume Apollinaire used to say the eye could gaze into tirelessly.

Viewed from outside, all this is baffling and resembles a dense fog. The foreigner sees only opposing groups, personalities who contradict one another, individuals who insult one another. Does he perchance realize that it is all like boiling water, in which rise bubbles of a matchless iridescence?

In France everyone thinks. Even folly thinks. Everyone is on the stage. Few people sit in the audience, and ordinarily our public believes that it could do a good deal better than our leaders do. But this astonishing indiscipline offers advantages. France today is one of the few countries where the crowd can make a hit of a play because the papers condemn it. No one takes

anyone else's word for anything, and I dare say that a spirit of contradiction pushed to this extreme leads the crowd to hold a directly contrary opinion and to applaud because there are some who want to boo.

I have often written that the spirit of creation is simply the spirit of contradiction in its highest form. A great work opposes itself to a preceding one and contradicts it — a fact which does not keep the preceding work from living, breathing, taking root, and flowering. One should ever be reminded of this Hebrew proverb: "Equilibrium engenders inertia. It is from disequilibrium that exchanges are born."

This is the secret of most celebrated architectures — those of Versailles, of Venice, of Amsterdam. The plumb line has killed that human vivacity of façades which used to offer the irregular and charming features of a face. There is a great danger in wanting order and in not providing for a kind of disorder where the soul feeds for itself and is not dried out in dead lines.

One day, in the country, I stumbled on an old copy of the *Journal* of the Goncourt brothers. I opened it and discovered this passage: "A friend has just arrived from New York with a piece of news we dare not believe and which would be the real

end. *The wash-basins remain fixed to the walls.*" One's first instinct, on reading this, is to laugh. But on further reflection one begins to wonder if our troubles don't come from just this.

For man must now obey the order given to him by the wash basin and hie himself to it, as the ox to the stable, the horse to the feedbin. His will succumbs and leaves him weak. Formerly water, light, food were brought to us, without our having to move. We were free to remain in our armchair with a book in our hands. Domestic help was plentiful and gracious, and everyone could have it. But this help has disappeared, supplanted by mechanics. The faucet has killed the water carrier. And here's the rub! While the faucet works well in America, it works very badly in France.

Our mistake, then, would be to imitate nations of discipline and order. Our strength will be to admit our indiscipline and our disorder and to draw hidden resources from them. The more talented a man is, the more he taxes himself, the more he struggles against the gift which predisposes his ink to flow faster, the more he strives to master and contain it.

Our universe develops in waves and eddies. Where there is an eddy, there will be a wave. It is a question of patience, and I for one do not believe that a wounded country, that a working sore, can cure itself in a few weeks. It is absurd to say that France is tottering. France, after all she has suffered, is a working sore. This is a term used in medicine to describe a sore which is in a good condition. Which is not to say that the sore is ugly and turning to gangrene. On the contrary, a sore which does not work is a dangerous sore and one which merely seems hygienic. It fools those who are reassured by what is static and who are unaware of the terrible work of plants, saps, and barks.

Sergei Diaghilev, who took the colorful and famous Russian Ballet around the world, used to tell me that he never launched a new spectacle

before showing it in Paris. It is, he said, the only city in the world where works of art are capable of arousing lovers' quarrels.

I know well that today politics play a considerable role and that party disputes overshadow lovers' quarrels; but *entre nous*, don't these disputes offer the same appearances of peevishness and ill will which characterize lovers' quarrels? It is still a fine disorder, a good fracas, a splendid storm, a rich dunghill, a fertilizing humus thanks to which plants burst right, left, up, and down, showering their seeds all over. And what matters is this "all over."

It would be amusing, while we are at it, to list the names of the poets who honor France and assure her prestige. They have been the men whom she pursued with her police and her scorn: Racine, Villon, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Ducasse, Nerval, Verlaine. So many setbacks, desperate retirements into monasteries, flights, suicides, catastrophes.

If all this changed, there would be discipline, order, awe, comfort — all of them qualities which, I repeat, France does not possess and which would cause her death. France bristles with peaks and ridges. A flat France is unimaginable. Anyone wishing to flatten her would fail. Just try, and she bristles. And it is a good thing that there are some who try to do so. For a country which took its disorder for granted, and honored it, would be a land of death. Its accidents would stiffen into principles and its men would, in the process of reading horticultural treatises, come to resemble plants.

France has everything to lose in aspiring to those resources for which she is unfitted — a huge industry, for example. Her prerogatives are the arts, invention, discovery, accident. Above all, accident, that son of disorder, which breaks the straight line and offers those surprises which France naïvely continues to call miracles and which give to things a course that no one could foresee.

At a time when difficulties, not to be cured by any swift solution, confuse and antagonize the Western allies, it is well to be reminded of what a creatively complex people the French really are — so independent in their thinking; so original in their taste; so inimitable in their love of farce; so shrewdly aware of the foreigners in their midst, yet so critical of themselves; so devoted to their soil and their Paris.

Special thanks are due to Curtis Cate for his help in persuading and translating many of our French contributors.

— THE EDITOR

THE HOUSE OF GALLIMARD

BY GUY DUMUR

Born in 1922, GUY DUMUR is a young author and critic who has written two novels and a book on the plays of Pirandello. A resident of Paris, he has had ample opportunity to observe the fortunes of the house of Gallimard from both the inside and the outside.

WHEN Hitler's ambassador, Otto Abetz, arrived in Paris in the fateful summer of 1940, he made this celebrated remark: "To control France, one must control the Banque de France and the *Nouvelle Revue Française*." It was a tribute to the fact that he was in a country where the power of the pen is no less awesome a social force than the power of the purse.

Controlling the purse, as it happened, proved to be an easier task for the German occupants than controlling the pen. For the Banque de France a few SS men were enough. But the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, or the N.R.F., as it is more familiarly known, was another matter. A French Fascist writer called Drieu La Rochelle, whose books Gallimard had published ever since the end of World War I, was eased into the editorial chair of the monthly review which for the preceding thirty years had effectively dominated the world of French letters. For two years Drieu La Rochelle sought to gather about him writers who had nothing in common with those who were in the "free zone" of Vichy or who had taken refuge in North Africa, England, and the United States. Then, when the Germans marched into Southern France, the *Nouvelle Revue* ceased to appear, though the publishing company associated with it, which was still run by Gaston Gallimard and his staff, continued to function. Two years later Drieu La Rochelle, fearful of the fate awaiting him at the hands of France's new masters, committed suicide.

The difficult war years proved, in effect, to be

the crucible in which the post-war literature and thought of France were fired. While Abetz was talking of "possessing" the N.R.F., the Vichy government was accusing N.R.F. writers of being responsible for the debacle. To this accusation the aging Gide, who had left France for the North Africa of his youth, replied: "Were they held responsible for the victory of 1918?"

Behind this war of recriminations a new clandestine literature was silently growing up. From the sky the Royal Air Force kept raining down printed odes to liberty written by Louis Aragon (who was in the Vichy zone) and by Paul Éluard (who had remained in Paris). The former editor of the N.R.F., Jean Paulhan, whom Drieu La Rochelle had replaced, was arrested and imprisoned for editing a clandestine journal called *Les Lettres Françaises*. But hardly a year later, in 1942, Gallimard published the first novel of Albert Camus, a young Resistance author destined to become famous. He had been recommended to Gallimard by a colonel of the Maquis, one André Malraux.

Thus, with the dawn of the Liberation in the summer of 1944, the N.R.F. publishing company, still directed by the brothers, sons, and nephews of the Gallimard family, emerged stronger than ever, even though its monthly review had been suppressed. It was, in fact, in the review's old offices that Jean-Paul Sartre (himself a Gallimard author) edited the first number of his new magazine, *Les Temps Modernes*, with its famous Existentialist manifesto on *la littérature engagée*—the literature of commitment. The star of Albert

Camus, editor and chief editorialist of the newspaper *Combat*, was beginning to rise in the firmament. André Malraux, enthroned as Minister of National Education, was about to become the intellectual standard-bearer of the Gaullist party. Paul Valéry, another Gallimard writer, was given a national funeral, and a little later André Gide received the Nobel Prize. The Paris theaters put on plays by Sartre, Camus, and Paul Claudel, the greatest French dramatist of this century. The Rue Hamelin, in the fashionable 16th *arrondissement*, was given the new name of Marcel Proust, in honor of the famous writer who had lived there.

Thus, within a year or two of the end of hostilities, the Gallimards had reconstituted what can be called "the brain trust of French intelligence." Living or dead, the authors and editors who had launched and sustained the N.R.F. appeared to have re-established their literary hegemony, and on an unprecedented scale. For, paradoxical as it may seem, it had taken the violent upheavals of the occupation — far more violent than the stresses of World War I — to bring to full light the almost secret forces representing all that was most intelligent in France. Thirty-five years had elapsed since the founding of the N.R.F., and yet the thousands of books which had been published in the famous white cover with its thin-lined borders and its black and red lettering had hitherto attained only a few thousand readers. For years, thanks to the N.R.F., Frenchmen had talked of the "divorce between literature and the public." The explanation of this phenomenon given by Jean Paulhan was simple: "There are bad books which everyone reads and good books that no one reads." It went without saying that the N.R.F., under his direction, intended to continue publishing only the latter.

The literary historians of France perceived long ago that the history of French literature since 1910 has essentially been the history of the N.R.F., for it has not only published the cream of modern French literature, but it has also presented the best of contemporary world literature to the French reading public. From the start, the writers who succeeded one another at the head of Gallimard strove ceaselessly to open its doors to important foreign authors. A good half of the literary life of Valéry Larbaud, today a model for many young authors, was devoted to foreign translations. Melville, Meredith, Dostoevski, Kafka, D. H. Lawrence, William Faulkner, Joseph Conrad, Thomas Mann, Dos Passos, Joyce, and Lorca are just a few of the influential foreign writers who were introduced to the French thanks to the efforts of men like Valéry Larbaud, Gide, and Malraux — the Malraux of *The Voices of Silence*, who thirty years ago prefaced a work of Faulkner's

with the remark: "*Sanctuary* is the introduction of Greek tragedy into the detective novel."

This world-wide aspect of their work deserves stressing all the more because the N.R.F. has sometimes been accused of constituting an esoteric "literary chapel." In the nineteen-thirties a right-wing journalist named Henri Béraud unleashed a violent campaign against those he held up to public scorn as "*les longues figures*" — those grim, long-faced authors whose names, he declared, connoted universal boredom. And who were they? They were Marcel Proust, Paul Valéry, André Gide, Jean Giraudoux, Valéry Larbaud, Malraux, Claudel, and the surrealist poets Éluard, Aragon, and André Breton; all those who have made the French literature of the twentieth century as great as was its past.

THE prejudices against writers of lasting talent were, in their own way, an indirect tribute to the lofty standards maintained by those who had originally founded the N.R.F. in the years 1908-1910. For the N.R.F. had been founded in an almost deliberate effort to be, if not unpopular, at any rate unfashionable. Its authors had set out to break with the worldly literature of the period, with the *amateurisme*, academicism, and facile psychology of the successors of Émile Zola's naturalism, typified by men like Paul Bourget, Octave Feuillet, and Anatole France. "The reign of art," as one of the N.R.F.'s founders, the writer Jean Schlumberger, exclaimed in 1910, "demands the enslavement of the artist."

In poetry the god of N.R.F.'s originators was Mallarmé, that anchorite of letters. In philosophy it was Nietzsche, rather than Bergson, while in literature it was the great French classic writers of the past. But above all, their aim was to afford a hearing to aspiring authors of their own generation. For the leading editors of the day were not interested in young writers. A young writer who was not content simply to satisfy the frivolous tastes of *la belle époque*, as France's Edwardian age is called, could only get his works published by paying for them. Fortunately for the *Nouvelle Revue Française* there were writers at that time who were men of independent means and who could place their fortunes in the service of good literature. Such was the case with its two author-founders, Schlumberger and Gide, both of whom were the sons of rich Protestant families. And such was also the case with Gaston Gallimard, who at the age of seventy-seven still runs the publishing company he started fifty years ago.

Because he has never been an author, but only an editor, Gaston Gallimard's story is less well

known than that of the other literary luminaries who contributed to the early issues of the N.R.F. There is, indeed, little chance that he will ever write his memoirs. "Too much to say," he explains with a smile whenever the subject is brought up.

Gaston's father, Paul Gallimard, had inherited a sizable fortune. He was one of the very few Frenchmen who, at the end of the nineteenth century, had understood the real impact of the revolution then taking place in the world of art. He was



ANDRÉ GIDE

a close friend of Manet, and he had bought some of the first Cézannes and Van Goghs, which no one else wanted. For one of the finest of these he had paid just three hundred francs (about sixty dollars at the time). He had also made a trip with Renoir to Spain, where they both discovered a painter then totally unknown: El Greco.

Renoir, in fact, was the family's closest friend. With hardly a cent to his name, he used to take most of his meals with the Gallimards, and Gaston recalls once seeing him, in the heat of conversation — for Renoir was a brilliant talker — sculpt the pile of spinach in front of him as though it were a lump of clay. In the evening the Gallimard children, Gaston, Raymond, and Jacques, would be taken to the Théâtre des Variétés, which their

father had bought, it was said, for a famous singer. Brought up in this Bohemian and luxurious milieu, Gaston seemed destined for a life of dilettantish ease, slowly squandering his father's fortune by selling an occasional Renoir which, with the passage of time, would have allowed anyone to lead a more than comfortable life. At the age of twenty he idled away his time buying new ties or new books, riding in the Bois de Boulogne, and in the evening, going to the theater in order to write an occasional column of drama criticism for Robert de Flers, who was content to sign it.

Robert de Flers was the leader of a group of writers and men of the world who would dine at Larue or Maxim's after the theater. Gaston would accompany them, and often, around two in the morning, he would see a strange person appear, clothed invariably in a fur coat. A man "with the chest of a mechanical toy" Jean Cocteau once described this asthmatic and snobbish chronicler of worldly happenings, whose name was Marcel Proust.

One day the young Gaston read a book which made a deep impression on him: *The Immoralist* of André Gide. He wrote the author, and they became friends. Like others of his age and generation, Gide had long felt the crying need for a review and a publishing house which would afford a hearing to young authors. The idea appealed to Gaston, and with Gide and Schlumberger, the three decided to launch a new monthly, the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, the first issue of which appeared in 1908. Two years later the three friends put up six thousand francs each out of their own pockets to start a publishing company, and the following year they managed to publish their first three books: Gide's *Isabelle*, Paul Claudel's *L'Otage*, and Charles-Louis Philippe's *La Mère et L'Enfant*. The first of these was printed on a Belgian printing press, which now belongs to the Gallimards. It was such a sloppy job that Gide ordered all but a dozen copies destroyed, and these today are worth a fortune.

THUS the N.R.F. was born, around a team of ambitious writers which included, in addition to the founders, Giraudoux, Valéry Larbaud, the poet Charles Péguy, and the producer Jacques Copeau. Copeau, who was to become the greatest French theater director of this century and the inspiration for Louis Jouvet, Jean-Louis Barrault, and Jean Vilar, was looking for a new theater, and it was Gaston who found one for him: the Athénée-Saint-Germain, on an old street bearing the picturesque name of Rue du Vieux Colombier — the street of the old dovecot. Gaston still likes

to relate, with a twinkle in his eye, how when he took possession of the vacant hall, he was informed by the Paris Prefecture of Police that "for reasons of safety, the internal arrangements would not allow for stage-sets." It was this restriction, according to Gaston, that gave rise to the new formula of dramatic austerity, which was destined to revolutionize the French theater, cluttered as it was with all the extravagances of lavish Edwardian spectacle.



JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

Be this as it may, Gaston lent his willing patronage to the struggle against the "baseness of the contemporary theater." As administrator of the Théâtre du Vieux Colombier, he set up his headquarters in a little corridor office, and through the glass window he kept one eye on the theater and the other on the publications of the N.R.F. The progress was slow but steady, thanks in large part to his own diligence in running after manuscripts and to his offer to publish "free of charge" the works of men like Valéry Larbaud and Roger Martin Du Gard (a future Nobel Prize winner), who had spent small fortunes getting their first manuscripts into print. It was Gaston who thought of collecting the scattered poems of Paul Valéry into one volume — an idea which had never occurred to their author. It was also he who, for ten years, kept urging Paul Valéry to write *La*

Jeune Parque (published in 1917), one of the most epoch-making French poems to have been written in this century.

The almost puritanical zeal of his readers, the most important of whom was Gide, was, however, soon to get the N.R.F. into trouble in an incident which has remained famous. In 1913 a manuscript entitled *Du Côté de Chez Swann* was submitted to Gide for his critical appraisal. Gide, who knew of Proust only as a ubiquitous salon snob and as a writer of light prose in *Figaro* — that is to say, as the incarnation of all the vacuous literature of the boulevards that Gide and his associates were bent on combating — leafed through *Swann* with a casual eye and sent it back to its author. Proust, who could get it published nowhere else, took it to Bernard Grasset and had to pay heavily to get him to print a first edition, limited to eleven hundred copies. Their appearance eventually sufficed to arouse Gide's colleagues from their complacency and to make them realize that a frightful error had been made. Gaston went to call on the night owl of Maxim's and talked Proust into letting him buy up all of Grasset's published copies of the first two volumes of *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu*. Hiring a fiacre, he went down to the printer's and bought every copy he could lay his hands on (about eight hundred) for 2.70 francs apiece. Filling the cab with them, he returned in triumph to the small office he occupied not far from Saint Germain des Prés. Here he hastily had all the Grasset covers removed, replacing them with new ones of the N.R.F. The success of *Swann* was immense, and from all over Paris bibliophiles descended on Grasset, ready to pay for the old covers in their weight in gold. To satisfy the demand, Grasset's manager did not hesitate to have a whole set of new covers printed up, which he sold at fancy prices.

This incident proved a turning point in Gaston Gallimard's career with the N.R.F. That year (1916) he was confronted with serious financial difficulties, and to keep the review and the book business going, he was forced to borrow from abroad and to set up a corporation. It was "a few Grasset covers" for the first edition of *Du Côté de Chez Swann*, he likes to say, which kept him from remaining sole master in his own house.

The war of 1914, in which Alain-Fournier, Charles Péguy, and Guillaume Apollinaire were killed, had scattered many French authors. During that period, Gaston Gallimard had gone to the United States with Copeau's Vieux Colombier theater group on a trip financed by the banker Otto Kahn. They landed the day the Bolshevik revolution broke out. On returning to France after the armistice, Gaston realized that the N.R.F.

was not simply a small literary circle, but a publishing venture which needed to be sustained and expanded.

This created new financial problems. Paul Gallimard's Renoirs and Cézannes had long ago been sold. But one day a private detective called on Gaston and offered to sell him a small crime weekly. With a true businessman's flair, Gaston bought it. It was not long before *Detective*, as the weekly was called, was bringing in enough money to finance the publication of the works of the surrealist poets, whom Gaston had immediately adopted at the urging of his two principal advisers, Jacques Rivière and Jean Paulhan.

Along with the surrealists, a new generation of writers of action, led by Paul Morand, Drieu La Rochelle, Montherlant, and André Malraux, appeared on the scene. It was Gaston Gallimard who put up the money for Malraux's expedition to the jungles of Cambodia, where he claimed there were abandoned Khmer temples to be rescued. He found them all right, and cut away whole sections of jungle-covered bas-reliefs with a metal hack saw, only to be arrested and sentenced to prison for trying to make off with state property. In the end he never served the sentence, but the black mark entered against his name in his judicial record almost kept him, twenty years later, from becoming a cabinet minister.

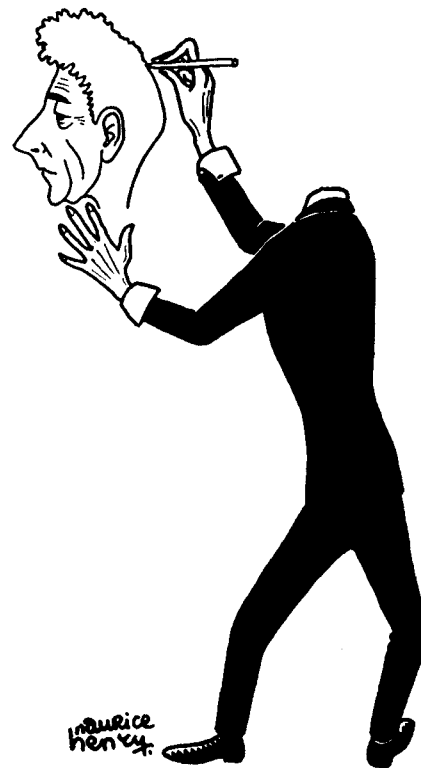
From then on almost every author of talent was sooner or later adopted by the enterprising Gaston. With a canny business sense he did not hesitate to print best sellers, but at the same time the N.R.F.'s review and literary departments clung tenaciously to their high standards and insisted on publishing works which might take ten, fifteen, or twenty years to reach a wide audience. It was, for example, the French translation of *Gone with the Wind*, which was still selling a hundred copies a day a couple of years ago, which financed the publication of the poems of Henri Michaux and Jules Supervielle and the strange confessions of Marcel Jouhandeau. Every year some new genius would be added. In 1929 it was a young aviator named Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. In 1938 it was a young professor of philosophy named Sartre; in 1942 a young native of Algiers called Camus.

SHORTLY before the war Gide—who had a mania for stuffing his pockets with books when embarking on trips, came to Gaston with a suggestion made to him by Jacques Schiffrin. The idea was to put out a collection of the classics on thin, onion-skin paper, like the one which Collins had made famous in England. The result was the *Collection de la Pléiade* which—to cite just one

example—was able to compress all of Shakespeare into just two volumes. This innovation has proved a boon in an age when living space has become increasingly cramped and scarce, and it explains the fact that though each *Pléiade* volume is relatively expensive (costing around three thousand francs each, or about seven dollars), André Gide's *Journal* alone has sold 200,000 copies in this edition.

Incredible as it may sound, it is not the detective novels of the famous *Série Noire* which are now the financial mainstay of Gallimard, but the *Pléiade* editions, Malraux's books on art (translated into a score of languages), and the General Encyclopedia, whose first six volumes have already appeared under the editorship of Raymond Quénau, the most caustic novelist in the Gallimard household.

Running this vast literary empire now requires the attention of no less than four Gallimards, while two adjacent town houses, one with an entrance on the Rue Sébastien-Bottin and the other on the Rue de l'Université, barely suffice to house its two hundred employees. At their head is a committee of readers who, with the exception of the Gallimards, are all authors in their own right. It is probably the most brilliant group of literary censors in the world. Here, in a labyrinth



JEAN COCTEAU

of converted salons, winding corridors, and sudden staircases, every degree of political and artistic tendency meets and clashes. In the entrance hall of the Rue Sébastien-Bottin, next to an austere waiting room with fluorescent lights, the Communist poet Aragon may bump into Jean Cocteau, clothed, with Bohemian dandyism, in a navy blue jacket lined with red satin. Jean-Paul Sartre will try to avoid Albert Camus, whose rise, Gaston Gallimard claims, is the fastest he has ever known. Anxious young authors await the decisive verdict of Jean Paulhan, the editor of the review, who receives them with Olympian maliciousness in an office walled with deforming mirrors and Dubuffet paintings.

Known as the *eminence grise* of French literature, Paulhan has been a force in the N.R.F. for thirty years. His influence is widespread, his friendships are famous, but no one pretends to know him. A great friend of the painters Braque and Dubuffet, he often invites writers to his house to play ping-pong, bowls, or dominoes. He is frequently the butt of jokes on account of his thin, high-pitched voice, but it comes not from any affectation but from the fact that he was gassed in World War I. He has the reputation of being a playboy, but he was one of the few French writers to have been arrested by the Gestapo. His *bons mots* are legendary, and the hatreds he arouses inextinguishable. Only recently some young writers had a post card printed up which they sent around to their friends. One side of it contained nothing but the words: "Jean Paulhan does not exist." Paulhan, however, was flattered by this delicate attention. "This has never been said except of God and myself," was his characteristic retort.

Next to his office in the rambling town house on the Rue Sébastien-Bottin is a large, oval salon looking out over a lovely eighteenth-century garden. This is the inner sanctum, where the Gallimards work at two different desks: Gaston and his son Claude, Raymond and his son Michel. Like persons of royal blood, they are addressed by their first names, and sometimes, when unpaid authors grow too impatient and importuning over the telephone, they beat a skillful retreat behind their namesakes and explain that it is not they, but their brother, their uncle, their cousin, or their father to whom the complaint should be addressed. Inseparable companions all of them, they buy the same kind of country houses, boats, and automobiles.

Gaston, however, who has always remained a bit of a Bohemian, still lives among half-opened crates of books in the old family apartment building near the Gare Saint-Lazare. He, who at the age of twenty was bent on doing nothing, is surprised today at the extent of his own labors. Though the hair on his handsome head has turned a venerable white, he still retains an astounding vitality and visits his office every day. The one notable defect, perhaps, in a gentleman of exquisite courtesy and rare elegance is a trait that one might expect in a young editor: he cannot stand the idea of an author of talent being published by anyone but himself. It was thus with a sense of ironic amusement that he accepted an invitation in March to serve as best man at the marriage of Françoise Sagan, the international best seller whose works he has not published. He knows better than anyone that the hypercritical readers' committee who constitute his high command at the N.R.F. would probably have rejected *Bonjour Tristesse*, if it had been offered them, as not being good enough.

Despite Gallimard's commercial power, despite its impressive collection of Nobel laureates and Prix Goncourt winners, despite its galaxy of twentieth-century classics, this is the great challenge now facing it: how to preserve that spirit of curiosity, innovation, and adventure which marked the early years of the N.R.F. Editing fifty-volume encyclopedias or financing new translations of the Bible and the *Thousand and One Nights*, as has been done recently, is not enough to make aspiring authors feel at home in the great literary factory that the house of Gallimard has become. Even the huge sales assured by a noisy publicity and the award of important literary prizes (the latest Prix Goncourt winner, Roger Vailland's *La Loi*, has sold 300,000 copies) are not enough to dazzle conscientious authors, whose greatest joy is to know that their works have been read and approved by Gallimard's formidable brain trust.

Years ago, when André Gide wrote his famous letter asking Proust's forgiveness for his casual rejection of *Swann*, Proust answered him: "I sent my manuscript to the N.R.F. because I thought it was the only way of getting it read by you." Nothing could better express the ideal relationship which should exist between Gallimard and aspiring young authors; but inevitably it raises the question whether our age is still capable of finding and launching new Prousts and new Gides.

PIERRE EMMANUEL

Author of numerous volumes of prose and verse, PIERRE EMMANUEL is in charge of the English language broadcasts of the French government radio station, Radio-Diffusion Française. Before the war he taught at a French lycée and in 1948 he lectured in universities and colleges in the United States. For several years he has taught at Harvard University's Summer School.

IS FRANCE BEING AMERICANIZED?



EVERYONE remembers the Great Anti-Coke War, desperately fought in French cafés a few years ago. Like most crusades, its pure motive — the defense of French wine, apéritif, and Eau de Vichy — was mixed with more dubious interests, and was used as a trump card by unscrupulous neutralists. Thus a most noble fight ended in confusion. Without becoming a national drink, Coca-Cola was tolerated as a so-called beverage, especially on hot days. The great cause of the French way of life suffered a blow whose results, according to the pessimists — the core of the nation — ought to prove far-reaching.

Yet the future did not turn out the worst. Chewing gum and bubble gum, introduced by the American Army, were doubtless a social nuisance for a couple of years: they stuck to armchairs, shoes, professors' pants, and conversations. Children and half-baked adults were in danger of becoming ruminants. Their rhythm of thought had slowed down, and to keep up with the pace of time, they attended in increasing numbers American motion pictures, preferably those full of blood, car races, and revolver shots. "What will happen?" moaned the pessimists. Nothing; juvenile delinquency did not climb the statistical scale, though blue jeans, at first sold in stores dealing in American surplus and later manufactured in France, are now on sale in every open-air market.

We were entering the second part of the century: high time to become philosophical, as centuries in their fifties start to be. Vastly prejudiced essayists — they are the best in any case — began to analyze the concept of "Americanization." It turned out to be a very unpleasant monster, hardly recognizable for anyone who had lived a normal and decent life in the U.S.A. Americanization, like a creeping disease, would endanger the deepest roots of the Western soul; within a couple of decades, without noticing the imperceptible process, the French would become neo-Americans. For the sake of our national pride, we accepted a minor reservation: Americanization, though inescapable, would proceed more slowly in France than in Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, England, and generally all Western European countries. Yet the prospect was ghastly enough, for what is an American? A human robot; a worshiper of machines, brainwashed by the movies, advertising, and television, devoid of tradition, of family life, of self-intimacy; a money-maker for whom the dollar is the only universal value; a super-hygienic food washer who cleans vegetables with chlorine, totally depersonalized, conditioned to live in a spiritual vacuum: in short, a science fiction nightmare and a bore.

Where did that mythical caricature come from, and why did we call it American? France has not yet fully recovered from the aftermath of war; we in France have not yet consented to re-evaluate our position in the world today, and we suffer both from a wounded pride and a lack of confidence in ourselves. We had been "*la grande nation*," and we used to think of France as the universal teacher of spiritual values. Our defeat tore us apart in a world of conflicting ideologies, none of which was a product of our national spirit. Besides, the world was changing too fast for us; we felt that we had been left behind, twenty years behind the times, and did not want to admit it. We looked for a scapegoat on which to vent our anxiety and our resentment. We resented America as the real victor in the war, in our part of the world at least; as the land of technical success whose example was contagious for our neighbors in Europe, big and small. America was loudly advertising its way of life; at the same time, it was

critically sensitive to its spiritual lacks; thus it gave us the scapegoat we needed, and material for prosecuting that scapegoat. We had but to emphasize, by isolating them from their natural environment, the very defects which the Americans themselves were more and more aware of, and were openly discussing.

THE French are the most conservative people on earth. The last war relatively spared their land and did not force them to start from nothing, as it did Germany. Our national economy a few years after the war was pretty much the same as it was in 1939. The more we delayed its adaptation to the times, the more upsetting for our fixed habits such a change was bound to be. Those habits are deeply grounded, and some of them correspond to much-treasured values. The French believe, rightly enough, that they have reached a level of civilization, an intellectual refinement, whose influence has pervaded even their daily lives; to lose it would be like losing one's identity. They feel also — though refusing to confess it — that they must change or perish. The survival of France is conditioned by external forces, especially in the economic field, but pride and prejudice make it hard for us to adopt a way of life foreign to our traditional tempo. We are, if I may say so, the Southerners of the West. For complex reasons, some good, some bad, we have tried until recently to resist the full process of mechanization. It does not mean that we do not change: our achievements in many fields deserve attention, but we are the last to value them seriously, and we do not derive from them the self-confidence we should. We lack unity of purpose, for we hesitate to sacrifice anything of the past; we have not yet decided what is essential in it and therefore must be preserved. Nonetheless, we are driven away from it, and pushed forward in spite of ourselves without enjoying our motion as we would if it came from our own free will.

Yet we cannot resist the forces at work in the world and in ourselves. Our virtue — and our vice — is to speculate about the state of the universe. We try to understand the way it is going, but in order to understand it better, we would like to stop its process. We find it extremely difficult to think and move at the same time, which explains our present historical neurosis: we are not able to control our own change, and we suffer intensely from it.

In recent years we have been entering a new phase, without being aware of it. Details in our daily lives have been modified, and new habits are imperceptibly shaping themselves in the man in

the street. Our mental resistance to a world whose idea we cannot grasp beforehand may yield by degrees to practical modifications in our familiar gestures and our close environment. We have adopted some of the American ways of life, without saying too loudly that we are imitating the Americans. Partly for that reason, the resentment against America has diminished and expresses itself, for the time being, through more or less stale jokes rather than in bitterness. We have thus opened the first breach in our standoffishness. And what a breach! We have desecrated food.

Returning travelers used to say ironically, five or six years ago: "Zurich is quite Americanized" or "Essen is a Middle-Western city." But, thank God, there were no snack bars in France, for "snacks would be the beginning of the end." Now there are snacks everywhere, and self-service too. In Lyon, the capital of French gastronomy, the famous Buffet de la Gare has been turned into a self-service establishment; it looks exactly like any Horn and Hardart branch (unpaid advertisement). The sacred French two-hour break for lunch will soon be but a nostalgic memory; for where in France if not in Lyon was the respect for food more of a religious and family cult? Foreigners complain that one does not eat so well in France as one used to. True: but the cooking and enjoyment of good food takes time, which very few people can still afford; it also takes fresh vegetables, herbs, and meats, which deep freezes superbly ignore. Ten years from now, we shall eat sandwiches at twelve, leave our offices at five, rush for a train or to a parking lot, and travel forty miles to return home to a cold supper and television.

The paradox in France is that we are both slow to move and rapidly moving. We have the fastest trains in the world, the best international railway and plane connections, one of the highest percentages of cars, a remarkable birth rate, a surprisingly promising economy; but these new energies have come after half a century of relative standstill, if we compare our own development with England's or Germany's. We are now compelled to adjust ourselves, as quickly as possible, to new forces and an expanding nation.

The same paradox is illustrated demographically: France is a very old and very young nation. Most of our political leaders have been reared in a nineteenth-century tradition, and the gap between them and our industrial leaders — between politics and economy — is becoming a deep chasm. A young generation is ready to take over everywhere, and the young bosses have their counterparts on the intermediary rungs of our civil service. But though they are most competent and full of initia-

tive in their field, they do not control the whole; they have not succeeded in changing the obsolete part of the existing French structures.

The word "technocrats" has been applied to them in a disparaging way. The mistrust of technicians and specialists is part of our national prejudice; whenever political matters are involved, technicians have to take a back seat. They resent it more and more, for they feel that they are, at least for the time being, the true makers of the nation. But they tend to value their action in economic terms only, so that French life goes on along two separate lines, in spite of the efforts of men like Mendès-France who are trying to make the economy the axis of politics.

For such people, to whom American methods are well known and who admire the way American specialists are integrated into political life, Americanization means first of all simplification. Young technicians — future engineers or civil servants — travel a good deal nowadays. For the last ten years, a number of them have stayed in the United States long enough to study the techniques of modern efficiency, which they want to bring back home. I personally know a few of them who were given scholarships or went to the United States without definite purpose, through organizations like the Harvard International Seminar. They left France with the customary false notions about America, and after a few weeks in the United States they made some discoveries: first, naïve as it may seem, they found that life was quite human in the U.S.A. and far more diversified than a stereotyped image had led them to expect.

Second, American life had a charm for enterprising young people whose initiative had been stymied at home and who wanted to escape sterile discussions and to get a broader view of real problems. That they should be impressed on the scientific and technical level was natural, but they were struck also with the quality of thought among the American intellectuals and scholars. They realized that America had become a field of universal culture. A thirty-five-year-old philosopher told me, after a three-month stay in the United States: "To make life simpler in an increasingly complicated world is an American art, from which we may start to make life deeper and more significant."

THE battlefield of modernization is found primarily in French education, the structure of which is obsolete. The American system has influenced our reformers, sometimes for the better, sometimes not. Without saying it openly, we are trying to reorganize French universities upon the American pattern. More and more, on the grad-

uate or specialized levels, they will become groups of institutes. Teamwork in research is also steadily growing. The National Center of Scientific Research is the promoter of that reform, which breaks with our individualistic approach to learning. Our competitive system that has built up a society of mandarins (a caste whose privileges are traditional in the nation) resists a change which would endanger its taboos of selection.

On the other hand, the reformers are inclined to go too fast, especially in the changes they want to introduce into secondary education. While the best minds in the United States are underlining the defects of the American secondary schools, there is a tendency in France to adopt the equalitarian ideas which have weakened American high school education. The whole question turns on the necessity to build up, as quickly as possible, an intermediate class of technicians with practical qualifications; classical studies tend to be overlooked for the sake of basic scientific requirements. Genuine admiration for American achievements on a higher level led the French to accept uncritically a deterioration of culture during the formative years — a contradiction which we would have escaped if we had paid more attention to the educational systems in countries other than America.

Yet there is a logic in American influence: whether we like it or not, we are part of an Atlantic world where the American economy is predominant. America's help is not accepted without protest and more or less boastful attempts are made to reject it, but United States economic supremacy is a fact that we may have to live with for a long time. Western Europe does not yet exist as a world force. Until its time comes — if it ever does — to play an influential part in international affairs, France's fate and America's are linked together, as long as we resist Communism.

During the dark days of Budapest, the bulk of French public opinion woke up to that unity of purpose. Since then, anti-Americanism has quieted down, though it still exists potentially — as a symbol of ultranationalism. Whether the last American loan had political implications, we cannot say, but most people cannot dismiss the feeling that it comes with strings attached, and they resent what they consider a sort of control, though it may be unavoidable.

Another example of French ambiguous reaction toward America can be found in our attitude toward Robert Murphy's "good offices" mission and toward his very person, symbolic as they are of certain methods which in the past were considered intrusive. In spite of Mr. Murphy's diplomatic discretion, the French remain vigilant. Thus American influence, though increasing in our

daily life and helping us to modify many of our ways of thought and techniques, is counteracted by a feeling of dependence which rankles in most Western European countries but nowhere more virulently than here.

Is such a feeling totally unhealthy? I think not. Were it limited to narrow resentment and a blind refusal to partake of common responsibilities and interests, it would lead to a major crisis in France and perhaps to a disruption of the whole Western world. But if it represents a state of transition, expressing the need for a new balance of power between free nations cherishing the same values, it may bring about a greater sense of autonomy within a wider system of interdependence. We do not mind motels springing up along the French highways; we are not averse to French hot dogs, though they taste better in the United States. But we *would* mind American supremacy.

America is the first to know it, and its policy takes our reactions into account — at least we hope so. In spite of temporary drawbacks, a common psychology is progressively shaping the Western mind: Europe has imported American pragmatism, while America, especially for the last ten years, has undergone a spiritual change which makes it sensitive to patterns of thought and philosophies foreign to its pre-war traditions. During my last visits in the United States, I was struck by the growing number of inexpensive paperback collections that bring to the public the last two centuries of European culture from Hegel and Kierkegaard to Existentialist philosophy.

Thus the process of identification works both ways. The typical French reaction against the dangers of a mechanical age would easily find an echo even in the minds of American scientists. But it would be futile simply to go on denouncing a world whose motion we cannot stop. We have to work out together a practical and spiritual problem: How can our age of machines become truly human? From what I know of the United States today, it is no great prophecy to expect that American experience will be essential to our modern re-evaluation of man.

We may regret that French papers have been

invaded by *Opera Mundi* comics — which lose most of their flavor, by the way, when dubbed in French; yet such facts are but symptoms of American prestige, and they are absorbed without being adapted; they remain exotic and are liked as such. The James Dean craze that swept so many European countries did not make French youth hysterical. Young people were interested because it made them think: they found in Dean's pictures a spirit of rebellion which they do not ignore but which they are stable enough to keep in check. Excessive romanticism does not appeal to them. By contrast, it is significant that for the Polish or Hungarian youth James Dean has become a mythical figure of the times. (A Yugoslav writer told me that Russian film critics had made the trip to Belgrade especially to see one of Dean's pictures.)

In France, at least for the time being, no such big emotional wave is to be feared. The French owe their stability to various factors: first, to a long tradition of cosmopolitan culture; second, to the capricious tyranny of fashion, which though it seems to take no interest in fundamental values, does in fact preserve them. A third reason is French provincialism: Paris and Mantes (thirty miles away) are farther apart than New York and San Francisco. These three reasons are not contradictory; they are deeply interwoven. Their common result is the power of slow but serious assimilation which adds to our cultural treasure without upsetting it. Even the pains of assimilation — those we suffer now, for instance — increase our spiritual activity.

The French may not be the present makers of the world, but we are among those who will give it a human shape, for no matter how uncertain and foolish we may sometimes seem to other nations, we will not take that world for granted until it fulfills some universal and basic human demands. We still live by a great attribute of man, which has become one of our sacred words: *la raison*. It may prevent us from falling into the various heresies of progress, and make progress itself a firm ground for further human achievements of a more spiritual nature.

For those interested in French economics, there is a 48-page illustrated booklet, "France — From Reconstruction to Expansion, 1948-1958," which has just been published by the French Information Service. Liberal use of charts dramatizes the story of what is happening in trade, agriculture, energy, transportation, and other sectors of France's booming economy. Single copies may be secured without charge by writing to the Publisher of the ATLANTIC, 8 Arlington Street, Boston 16, Massachusetts.

MARCEL AYMÉ

The State of Grace

The author of sixteen novels, MARCEL AYMÉ is particularly well known in France for his many short stories, fables, and plays. The following story is taken from his new book, LE VIN DE PARIS. This translation by Norman Denny has been made available to the ATLANTIC by The Bodley Head of London.

IN THE year 1939 the best Christian in the Rue Gabrielle, and indeed in all Montmartre, was a certain Monsieur Duperrier, a man of such piety, uprightness, and charity that God, without awaiting his death, and while he was still in the prime of life, crowned his head with a halo which never left it by day or by night. Like those in Paradise, this halo, although made of some immaterial substance, manifested itself in the form of a whitish ring which looked as though it might have been cut out of fairly stiff cardboard, and shed a tender light. M. Duperrier wore it gratefully, with devout thanks to Heaven for a distinction which, however, his modesty did not permit him to regard as a formal promise regarding the hereafter. He would have been unquestionably the happiest of men had his wife rejoiced in this signal mark of Divine approval instead of receiving it with outspoken resentment and exasperation.

"Well, really, upon my word," the lady said, "what do you think you look like going round in a thing like that, and what do you suppose the neighbors and the tradespeople will say, not to mention my cousin Leopold. I never in my life

saw anything so ridiculous. You'll have the whole neighborhood talking."

Mme. Duperrier was an admirable woman, of outstanding piety and impeccable conduct, but she had not yet understood the vanity of the things of this world. Like so many people whose aspirations to virtue are marred by a certain lack of logic, she thought it more important to be esteemed by her concierge than by her Creator. Her terror lest she should be questioned on the subject of the halo by one of the neighbors or by the milkman had from the very outset an embittering effect upon her. She made repeated attempts to snatch away the shimmering plate of light that adorned her husband's cranium, but with no more effect than if she had tried to grasp a sunbeam, and without altering its position by a hairbreadth. Girdling the top of his forehead where the hair began, the halo hung low over the back of his neck, with a slight tilt which gave it a coquettish look.

The foretaste of beatitude did not cause Duperrier to overlook the consideration he owed to his wife's peace of mind. He himself possessed too great a sense of discretion and modesty not to perceive that there were grounds for her disquiet. The gifts of God, especially when they wear a somewhat gratuitous aspect, are seldom accorded the respect they deserve, and the world is all too ready to find in them a subject of malicious gossip. Duperrier did his utmost, so far as it was possible, to make himself at all times inconspicuous. Regretfully putting aside the bowler hat which he had hitherto regarded as an indispensable attribute of his accountant's calling, he took to wearing a large felt hat, light in color, the wide brim of

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which exactly covered the halo provided he wore it rakishly on the back of his head. Thus clad, there was nothing startlingly out of the way in his appearance to attract the attention of the passer-by. The brim of his hat merely had a slight phosphorescence which by daylight might pass for the sheen on the surface of smooth felt. During office hours he was equally successful in avoiding the notice of his employer and fellow workers. His desk, in the small shoe factory in Menilmontant where he kept the books, was situated in a glass-paned cubbyhole between two workshops, and his state of isolation saved him from awkward questions. He wore the hat all day, and no one was sufficiently interested to ask him why he did so.

But these precautions did not suffice to allay his wife's misgivings. It seemed to her that the halo must already be a subject of comment among the ladies of the district, and she went almost furtively about the streets adjoining the Rue Gabrielle, her buttocks contracted and her heart wrung with agonizing suspicions, convinced that she heard the echo of mocking laughter as she passed. To this worthy woman who had never had any ambition other than to keep her place in a social sphere ruled by the cult of the absolute norm, the glaring eccentricity with which her husband had been afflicted rapidly assumed catastrophic proportions. Its very improbability made it monstrous. Nothing would have induced her to accompany him out of doors. The evenings and Sunday afternoons which they had previously devoted to small outings and visits to friends were now spent in a solitary intimacy which daily became more oppressive.

In the dining room of light oak where, between meals, the long leisure hours dragged by, Mme. Duperrier, unable to knit a single stitch, would sit bitterly contemplating the halo, while Duperrier, generally reading some work of devotion and feeling the brush of angels' wings, wore an expression of beatific rapture which added to her fury. From time to time, however, he would glance up at her solicitously and, noting the expression of angry disapproval on her face, would feel regret which was incompatible with the gratitude he owed to Heaven, so that this in its turn inspired him with a feeling of remorse at one remove.

SO PAINFUL a state of affairs could not long continue without imperiling the unhappy woman's mental equilibrium. She began presently to complain that the light of the halo, bathing the pillows, made it impossible for her to sleep at night. Duperrier, who sometimes made use of the divine illumination to read a chapter of the Scriptures, was obliged to concede the justice of this griev-

ance, and he began to be afflicted with a sense of guilt. Finally, certain events, highly deplorable in their consequences, transformed this state of unease into one of acute crisis.

Upon setting out for the office one morning, Duperrier passed a funeral in the Rue Gabrielle, within a few yards of his house. He had become accustomed, outrageous though it was to his natural sense of courtesy, to greet acquaintances by merely raising a hand to his hat; but being thus confronted by the near presence of the dead, he decided, after thinking the matter over, that nothing could relieve him of the obligation to uncover his head entirely. Several shopkeepers, yawning in their doorways, blinked at the sight of the halo and gathered together to discuss the phenomenon. When she came out to do her shopping, Mme. Duperrier was assailed with questions, and in a state of extreme agitation she uttered denials whose very vehemence appeared suspect. Upon his return home at midday her husband found her in a state of nervous excitement which caused him to fear for her reason.

"Take off that halo!" she cried. "Take it off instantly! I never want to see it again!"

Duperrier gently reminded her that it was not in his power to remove it, whereupon she cried still more loudly, "If you had any consideration for me you'd find some way of getting rid of it. You're simply selfish, that's what you are!"

These words, to which he prudently made no reply, gave Duperrier much food for thought. And on the following day a second incident occurred to point to the inevitable conclusion. Duperrier never missed early morning Mass, and since he had become endowed with the odor of sanctity he had taken to attending it at the Basilica of the Sacré-Coeur. Here he was obliged to remove his hat, but the church is a large one and at that hour of the morning the congregation was sufficiently sparse to make it a simple matter for him to hide behind a pillar. On this particular occasion, however, he must have been less circumspect than usual. As he was leaving the church after the service an elderly spinster flung herself at his feet crying "Saint Joseph! Saint Joseph!" and kissed the hem of his overcoat. Duperrier beat a hasty retreat, flattered but considerably put out at recognizing his adorer as a middle-aged lady who lived only a few doors away. A short time later the devoted creature burst into the apartment, where Mme. Duperrier was alone, uttering cries of "Saint Joseph! I want to see Saint Joseph!"

Although somewhat lacking in brilliance and picturesque qualities, Saint Joseph is nevertheless an excellent saint; but his unsensational merits, with their flavor of solid craftsmanship and passive

good will, seem to have brought upon him some degree of injustice. There are indeed people, some of the utmost piety, who, without even being conscious of it, associate the notion of naïve complaisance with the part he played in the Nativity. This impression of simple-mindedness is further enhanced by the habit of superimposing upon the figure of the saint the recollection of that other Joseph who resisted the advances of Potiphar's wife. Mme. Duperrier had no great respect for the presumed sanctity of her husband, and this fervor of adoration which with loud cries invoked him by the name of Saint Joseph seemed to her to add the finishing touch to his shame and absurdity. Goaded into a state of almost demented fury, she chased the visitor out of the apartment with an umbrella and then smashed several piles of plates.

Her first act upon her husband's return was to have a fit of hysterics, and when she finally regained her self-control, she said in a firm voice, "For the last time I ask you to get rid of that halo. You can do it if you choose. You know you can."

Duperrier hung his head, not daring to ask how she thought he should go about it, and she went on: "It's perfectly simple. You only have to sin."

Uttering no word of protest, Duperrier withdrew to the bedroom to pray.

"Almighty God," he said, in substance, "you have granted me the highest reward that man may hope for upon earth, excepting martyrdom. I thank you, Lord, but I am married and I share with my wife the bread of tribulation which you deign to send us, no less than the honey of your favor. Only thus can a devout couple hope to walk in your footsteps. But it so happens that my wife cannot endure the sight or even the thought of my halo, not at all because it is a gift bestowed by Heaven but simply because it is a halo. You know what women are. When some unaccustomed happening does not chance to kindle their enthusiasm it is likely to upset all the rules and harmonies which they keep lodged in their little heads. No one can prevent this, and though my wife should live to be a hundred there will never be any place for my halo in her scheme of things. O God, you who see into my heart, you know how little store I set by my personal contentment and the evening slippers by the fireside. For the rapture of wearing upon my head the token of your good will I would gladly suffer even the most violent domestic upheavals. But, alas, it is not my own peace of mind that is imperiled. My wife is losing all taste for life. Worse still, I can see the day approaching when her hatred of my halo will cause her to revile Him who has bestowed it upon me. Am I to allow the life companion you chose for me to die and damn her soul for all eternity without making an effort to save her? I find my-

self today at the parting of the ways, and the safe road does not appear to me to be the more merciful. That your spirit of infinite justice may talk to me with the voice of my conscience is the prayer which in this hour of my perplexity I lay at your radiant feet, O Lord."

SCARCELY had Duperrier concluded this prayer than his conscience declared itself in favor of the way of sin, making of this an act of duty demanded by Christian charity. He returned to the dining room, where his wife awaited him grinding her teeth.

"God is just," he said, with his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat. "He knew what he was doing when he gave me my halo. The truth is that I deserve it more than any man alive. They don't make men like me in these days. When I reflect upon the vileness of the human herd and then consider the manifold perfections embodied in myself I am tempted to spit in the faces of the people in the street. God has rewarded me, it is true, but if the Church had any regard for justice I should be an archbishop at the very least."

Duperrier had chosen the sin of pride, which enabled him, while exalting his own merits, in the same breath to praise God, who had singled him out. His wife was not slow to realize that he was sinning deliberately and at once entered into the spirit of the thing. "My angel," she said, "you will never know how proud I am of you. My cousin Leopold, with his car and his villa at Vésinet, is not worthy to unloose the laces of your shoe."

"That is precisely my own opinion. If I had chosen to concern myself with sordid matters I could have amassed a fortune as easily as any man, and a much bigger one than Leopold's, but I chose to follow a different road and my triumph is of another kind. I despise his money as I despise him and all the countless other half-wits who are incapable of perceiving the grandeur of my modest existence. They have eyes and see not."

The utterance of sentiments such as these, spoken at first from half-closed lips, his heart rent with shame, became within a short time a simple matter for Duperrier, a habit costing him no effort at all. And such is the power of words over the human spirit that it was not long before he accepted them as valid currency. His wife, however, anxiously watching the halo, and seeing that its luster showed no sign of diminishing, began to suspect that her husband's sin was lacking in weight and substance. Duperrier readily agreed.

"Nothing could be more true," he said. "I thought I was giving way to pride when in fact I was merely expressing the most simple and ob-

vicious of truths. When a man has attained the highest degree of perfection, as I have done, the word 'pride' ceases to have any meaning."

This did not prevent him from continuing to extol his merits, but at the same time he recognized the necessity for embarking upon some other form of sin. It appeared to him that gluttony was, of the deadly sins, the one most suited to his purpose, which was to rid himself of the halo without forfeiting too much of the good will of Heaven. He was supported in this conclusion by the recollection, from his childhood days, of gentle scoldings for excessive indulgence in jam or chocolate. Filled with hope, his wife set about the preparation of rich dishes whose variety enhanced their savor. The Duperriers' dinner table was loaded with game, pâté, river trout, lobster, sweets, pastries, and vintage wines. Their meals lasted twice as long as before, if not three times. Nothing could have been more hideous and revolting than the spectacle of Duperrier, his napkin tied around his neck, his face crimson, and his eyes glazed with satiation, loading his plate with a third helping, washing down roast and stuffing with great gulps of claret, belching, dribbling sauce and gravy, and perspiring freely under his halo. Before long he developed such a taste for good cooking and rich repasts that he frequently rebuked his wife for an overcooked joint or an unsuccessful mayonnaise.

One evening, annoyed by his incessant grumbling, she said sharply, "Your halo seems to be flourishing. Anyone would think it was growing fat on my cooking, just as you are. It looks to me as though gluttony isn't a sin after all. The only thing against it is that it costs money, and I can see no reason why I shouldn't put you back on vegetable soup and spaghetti."

"That's enough of that!" roared Duperrier. "Put me back on vegetable soup and spaghetti, will you? By God, I'd like to see you try! Do you think I don't know what I'm doing? Put me back on spaghetti, indeed! The insolence! Here am I, wallowing in sin just to oblige you, and that's the way you talk. Don't let me hear another word. It would serve you right if I boxed your ears!"

One sin leads to another, in short, and thwarted greed, no less than pride, promotes anger. Duperrier allowed himself to fall into this new sin without really knowing whether he was doing it for his wife's sake or because he enjoyed it. This man who had hitherto been distinguished by the gentleness and graciousness of his nature now became given to thunderous rages; he smashed the crockery and on occasions went so far as to strike his wife. He even swore, invoking the name of his Creator. And these outbursts, growing steadily more frequent, did not prevent him from being both arrogant and gluttonous. He was, in fact,

now sinning in three different ways, and his wife mused darkly on God's infinite indulgence.

THE fact is that the noblest of virtues can continue to flourish in a soul sullied by sin. Proud, gluttonous, and irate, Duperrier nevertheless remained steeped in Christian charity and retained his lofty sense of duty as a man and a husband. Finding that Heaven refused to be moved by his anger, he resolved to be envious as well. To tell the truth, without his knowing it, envy had already crept into his soul. Rich feeding, which puts a burden on the liver, and pride, which stirs the sense of injustice, may dispose even the best of men to envy his neighbor. And anger lent a note of hatred to Duperrier's envy. He became jealous of his relations, his friends, his employer, the shopkeepers of the neighborhood, and even the stars of sports and screen whose photographs appeared in the papers. Everything infuriated him, and he was known to tremble with ignoble rage at the thought that the people next door possessed a silver carving set, whereas his own was only bone-handled. But the halo continued to glow with undiminished brightness. Instead of being dismayed by this, he concluded that his sins were lacking in reality, and he had no difficulty in reasoning that his supposed gluttony did not in fact exceed the natural demands of a healthy appetite, while his anger and his envy merely bore witness to a lofty craving for justice. It was the halo itself, however, which furnished him with the most solid arguments.

"I'm bound to say I would have expected Heaven to be a little more fussy," his wife said. "If all your gluttony and boasting and brutality and malice have done nothing to dim your halo, it doesn't look as though I need worry about my place in Paradise."

"Hold your jaw!" roared the furious man. "How much longer have I got to listen to your nagging? I'm fed up with it. You think it funny, do you, that a saintly character like myself should have to plunge into sin for the sake of your blasted peace of mind? Stop it, do you hear me?"

The tone of these replies was clearly lacking in that suavity which may rightly be looked for in a man enhaloed by the glory of God. Since he had entered upon the paths of sin, Duperrier had become increasingly given to strong language. His formerly ascetic countenance was becoming bloated with rich food. Not only was his vocabulary growing coarse, but a similar vulgarity was invading his thoughts. Mme. Duperrier did not fail to observe the changes that were overtaking her husband and even to feel some anxiety for the

future. But the thought of his possible descent into the abyss still did not outweigh in her mind the horror of being conspicuous. Rather than an enhaloed Duperrier she would have preferred a husband who was an atheist, a debauchee, and as crude of speech as her cousin Leopold. At least she would not then have had to blush for him before the milkman.

No special decision was called for on the part of Duperrier for him to lapse into the sin of sloth. The arrogant belief that he was required at the office to perform tasks unworthy of his merits, together with the drowsiness caused by heavy eating and drinking, made him naturally disposed to be idle; and since he had sufficient conceit to believe that he must excel in all things, even the worst, he very soon became a model of indolence. The day his indignant employer sacked him, he received the sentence with his hat in his hand.

"What's that on your head?" his employer asked.

"A halo," said Duperrier.

"Is it indeed? And I suppose that's what you've been fooling around with when you were supposed to be working?"

When he told his wife of his dismissal, she asked him what he intended to do next.

"It seems to me that this would be a good moment to try the sin of avarice," he answered gaily.

Of all the deadly sins, avarice was the one calling for the greatest effort of will power on his part. To those not born avaricious it is the vice offering the fewest easy allurements, and when it is adopted on principle there is nothing to distinguish it, at least in the early stages, from that most sterling of all virtues, thrift. Duperrier subjected himself to severe disciplines, such as confining his gluttony to himself, and thus succeeded in gaining a solid reputation for avarice among his friends and acquaintances. He really liked money for its own sake, and was better able than most people to experience the malicious thrill which misers feel at the thought that they control a source of creative energy and prevent it from functioning. Counting up his savings, the fruit of a hitherto laborious existence, he came by degrees to know the hideous pleasure of harming others by damming a current of exchange and of life.

This outcome, simply because it was painfully achieved, filled Mme. Duperrier with hope. Her husband had yielded so easily to the seductions of the other sins that God, she thought, could not condemn him very severely for an innocent, animal surrender which made him appear rather a victim deserving of compassion. His deliberate and patient progress along the road of avarice, on the other hand, could only be the fruit of a perverse desire which was like a direct challenge to

Heaven. Nevertheless, although Duperrier became miserly to the point of putting trouser buttons in the parish poor box, the brilliance and size of the halo remained unimpaired. This new setback, duly noted, plunged husband and wife into despair.

PROUD, gluttonous, angry, envious, slothful, and avaricious, Duperrier felt that his soul still possessed the odor of innocence. Deadly though they were, the six sins he had thus far practiced were nevertheless such as a First Communicant may confess to without undue qualms. The deadliest of all, lust, filled him with horror. Lust, the sin of the flesh, meant unqualified acceptance of the Devil's work. The enchantments of the night were a foretaste of the burning shades of Hell; the darting tongues were like the flames of eternity; the moans of ecstasy, the writhing bodies, these did but herald the wailing of the damned and the convulsions of flesh racked by endless torment. Duperrier had not deliberately reserved the sin of the flesh to the last: he had simply refused to contemplate it.

Mme. Duperrier herself could not think of it without disquiet. For many years the pair had lived in a state of delicious chastity, their nightly rest attended, until the coming of the halo, by dreams as pure as the driven snow. As she thought of it, the recollection of those years of continence was a source of considerable annoyance to Mme. Duperrier, for she did not doubt that the halo was the result. Plainly, that lily-white nimbus could be undone by lust alone.

Duperrier, after obstinately resisting his wife's reasoning, finally allowed himself to be convinced. Once again his sense of duty cast out fear. Having reached the decision, he was embarrassed by his ignorance, but his wife, who thought of everything, bought him a revolting book in which all the essentials were set forth in the form of plain and simple instruction. The nighttime spectacle of that saintly man, the halo encircling his head, reading a chapter of the abominable work to his wife, was a poignant one indeed. Often his voice trembled at some infamous word or some image more hideously evocative than the rest. Having thus achieved a theoretical mastery of the subject, he still delayed while he considered whether this last sin should be consummated in domestic intimacy or elsewhere. Mme. Duperrier took the view that it should all be done at home, adducing reasons of economy which did not fail to weigh with him; but having considered all the pros and cons he concluded that he had no need to involve her in vile practices which might be prejudicial to her own salvation.

Thereafter Duperrier spent most of his nights in disreputable hotels, where he pursued his initiation in company with the professionals of the quarter. The halo, which he could not conceal from these wretched associates, led to his finding himself in various odd situations, sometimes embarrassing and sometimes advantageous. In the beginning, owing to his anxiety to conform to the instructions in his manual, he sinned with little exaltation but rather with the methodical application of a dancer learning a new step or figure of choreography. However, the desire for perfection to which his pride impelled him soon achieved its lamentable reward in the notoriety which he gained among the women with whom he consorted. Although he came to take the liveliest pleasure in these pursuits, Duperrier nevertheless found them expensive and was cruelly afflicted in his avarice. One evening on the Place Pigalle he made the acquaintance of a creature twenty years of age, already a lost soul, whose name was Marie-Jannick. She had come from Brittany six months previously to go into service as maid of all work in the home of a municipal councilor who was both a socialist and an atheist. Finding herself unable to endure the life of this godless household, she had left and was now courageously earning her living on the Boulevard de Clichy. As was to be expected, the halo made a deep impression on that little religious soul. To Marie-Jannick, Duperrier seemed the equal of Saint Yves and Saint Ronan, and he, on his side, was not slow to perceive the influence he had over her and to turn it to practical use.

Thus it is that on this very day, the twenty-second of February of the year 1944, amid the darkness of winter and of war, Marie-Jannick, who will shortly be twenty-five, may be seen walking her beat on the Boulevard de Clichy. During the blackout hours the stroller between the Place Pigalle and the Rue des Martyrs may be startled to observe, floating and swaying in the darkness, a mysterious circle of light that looks rather like a ring of Saturn. It is Duperrier, his head adorned with the glorious halo which he no longer seeks to conceal from the curiosity of strangers; Duperrier, burdened with the weight of the seven deadly sins, who, lost to all shame, supervises the labors of Marie-Jannick, administering a smart kick in the pants when her zeal flags, and waiting at the hotel door to count her takings by the light of the halo. But from the depths of his degradation, through the dark night of his conscience, a murmur yet rises from time to time to his lips, a prayer of thanksgiving for the absolute gratuity of the gifts of God.

JULES SUPERVIELLE

COMPAGNONS DU SILENCE

*Compagnons du silence, il est temps de partir,
De grands loups familiers attendent à la porte,
La nuit lèche le seuil, la neige est avec nous,
On n'entend point les pas de cette blanche escorte.
Tant pis si nous allons toujours dans le désert,
Si notre corps épouse une terre funèbre,
Le soleil n'a plus rien à nous dire de clair,
Il nous faut arracher sa lumière aux ténèbres.
Nous serons entourés de profondeurs austères
Qui connaissent nos coeurs pour les avoir portés,
Et nous nous compterons dans l'ombre militaire
Qui nous distribuera ses aciers étoilés.*

COMRADES OF SILENCE

Comrades of silence, it is time to go;
Familiar wolves await us at the door:
Night licks the sill, the snow is coming too,
And soundless, a white escort, leads the way.
So much the worse for us if we must go
Through desert always, if our flesh wed clay.
The sun can tell us nothing any more —
We'll wring from darkness any light we can.
Austere, the deeps surrounding us will know
The hearts they bore. In that military shade
We'll count our numbers off, and every man
Will then be issued with a starry blade.

Translated by E. S. YNTEMA



ROBERT GUÉRIN spent more than a quarter of a century in advertising. Now retired, he lives in his country house at Aix-en-Provence, writing, collecting folk art, and cultivating his garden.

NOT long ago two broadcasters for the *Radio-Télévision Française* were put out to graze for three months for mentioning the name of a commercial product during a program. In France radio and television are state controlled and no advertising is permitted. Thus the government and the parliament who have decreed this state of affairs are the first to display their hostility to advertising, sacrificing billions of francs a year on the dusty altar of principle.

In France publicity is almost officially declared *persona non grata*, and this ostracism is the reflection of a general sentiment. The average Frenchman is hostile to publicity. He approaches it warily and reluctantly, pushed toward it by necessity, because in an industrialized country where production exceeds consumption, purchases must be stimulated and the public made to feel new cravings.

One of the peculiarities of the Frenchman's nature is that he wants to appear *less than he is*. A deep well of peasant mistrust and bourgeois parsimony incites him to live in the shadows. The fear of the neighbors, the fear of the future, the fear of the taxman have taught him the art of camouflage.

In America a millionaire is a national hero, a model citizen, a star in the financial firmament. The papers show him founding hospitals and hook-

ing swordfish from the deck of his yacht. His descendants bear numbers like the kings of France: W. W. Brown II, W. W. Brown III.

A French billionaire, on the other hand, is a fellow who lives off the income of his income. In a country where the Jacquerie and the Revolution of 1789 are still living memories, it is better to arouse pity than envy. In France public opinion stigmatizes and the treasury penalizes the man who has succeeded. Our great industrial firms are scared stiff of being talked about. The dream of every business manager is to stay safely in the red. If a French storekeeper has his shop front repainted and bathed in neon, the housewives say: "Look how that fool spends the money he has robbed us of," and they change grocers.

We thus find ourselves in a vicious circle. We don't like publicity because we do it badly. We do it badly because we don't like it.

If our publicity is so inferior to what it should be, it is above all for certain psychological reasons related to our character. The Frenchman is by nature a skeptic. He is distrustful and incredulous. He is fiercely independent, and he does not like someone dictating his conduct or trying to influence him. He is a reasoner, so that he distrusts all publicity that is not demonstrated a priori and

presented to him in equations. Besides, he does not understand publicity's essential role, and no one has explained it to him.

Schueller, the great manager of Monsavon and Dop, tells in his memoirs of having for neighbors two Nobel-Prize-winning scientists in physics and chemistry: Jean Baptiste Perrin and Joliot-Curie. Often he would argue with them, for they claimed that publicity was a huge hoax, a means of selling for a bogus price things that could be sold cheaply. "For example," Joliot-Curie would say, "you take four sous' worth of sulphate of soda, you put it in a lovely box which costs ten sous, you call it *Sels Kruschen*, and you sell it for twenty francs. That's your publicity for you!"

If men of superior intelligence in their own fields don't understand the first thing about publicity, is it surprising that the man in the street is even further in the dark?

The French are an old people who, like old-timers, remain attached to their habits of thought. For centuries they lived with the simple idea that the good things of the world are rare and that they sell themselves. "*A bon vin pas d'enseigne* — For a good wine no label," says the proverb.

Schueller used to explain to his friends that the machine age has changed all this by permitting men to produce quality goods at low prices. But in France if you say, "*C'est de la publicité*," it is generally with a pejorative connotation. It means: it's a bluff, a fast one they're trying to put over on you. If a young actress pretends to commit suicide by throwing herself into the Seine, so that the papers can talk about her, everyone says, "*C'est de la publicité*."

In France, however, publicity is usually honest, for the simple reason that it couldn't be anything else. First of all, because it is under constant surveillance. There is a government agency for the repression of fraud which watches over the health of the public and the truthfulness of advertising. When Monsavon launched its milk soap, the Bureau des Fraudes visited the Monsavon factory to see if the new soap really contained milk. The French press also has its own agency, the Bureau de la Vérification de la Publicité and the Union des Annonceurs, which includes the largest firms and tries to maintain the moral level of publicity.

Because the public is more distrustful, more difficult to convince, publicity in France should in theory be better, more astute, more subtle than anywhere else; but the opposite is the case. We have inventive minds, original artists, but we don't know how to use them. The leading poster makers of this century have been Frenchmen. Even today powerful personalities like Cassandre and Savignac are better known abroad than they are at home.

In Paris there is a new school for movie publicity which is unique. Belgians, Swiss, Englishmen, and even Americans now come here to have their film commercials made by movie men like Paul Grimault and Raik. Every year a publicity film festival is held at Cannes which shows that one can marry the art of salesmanship with the art of spectacle in a formula which will satisfy everyone. As for our publicity agencies, there are almost a dozen of them in Paris which, in organization and talent, can rank with the finest. They lack only one thing: clients.

In thirty-five years in the advertising business, I have known a good many business managers, but I have met only three or four who had any sense of publicity, who had that sort of directional flair you find in carrier pigeons. The rest lacked it completely. Their radars were stone dead. These men go in for publicity only because driven to it by force of circumstances, and they do so without conviction. They wouldn't mind getting themselves known, but they don't want to make themselves conspicuous, and their advertising reflects this contradiction.

The French industrialist thinks he knows more about his business than anyone else, and he is right. He also thinks that no one can talk about it better than he, and he is wrong. Several years ago a French industrialist embarked on an inspection tour of the United States. In Chicago, where he was received by the president of Swift & Company, the great meat-packing firm, he raised the inevitable question, "And how about your advertising?"

"Our advertising? I see it, like everyone else, when I open the morning paper."

"What? Doesn't your agent submit his projects to you?"

"Neither to me nor to any of my directors. Our agent knows his job and I let him do it, so long as he does it well."

Now let us see how it works in France.

The board of directors convenes at five o'clock in the afternoon. A small attraction has been readied for the occasion.

"Gentlemen," announces the Chairman, "although advertising is not one of the essential activities we are concerned with here, I thought you might like to see the make-up of a poster we are thinking of using next season. I should like your reactions to it."

The publicity chief and the poster, one bearing the other, are ushered into the sanctum. It is a thoroughly nondescript poster, which is why it has been selected. A few hasty retouchings have obliterated any signs of vigor and originality that

threatened to creep into it. As such it is ready — a masterpiece of mimicry. There is really nothing more to be said. However, you never appeal in vain to the critical sense of sever cultivated Frenchmen during the hour of digestion.

"It's fine, of course," says the Economist, "but there's one thing I don't care for, and that's that white background. It doesn't show up. And it will encourage lovers in the Metro to scribble messages on it and kids to cover it with lewd drawings. It seems to me that a blue background —"

"Blue is a color which doesn't stand up," says the Admiral. "In a week your poster will have faded. In my opinion a lovely red —"

"Red!" interrupts the Diplomat. "You are not serious? You don't think we're going to fork out thousands to finance Stalin's propaganda! Now wouldn't we do better with green?"

"For many people," the Treasurer cuts in, "green brings bad luck. Take my wife — she refuses to wear the emeralds her grandmother left her, though they are real beauties."

Yellow, of course, is a magnificent color, but an unfortunate symbolism is associated with it which none of the directors, to spare his neighbor, feels like mentioning. Everyone is instinctively agreed that yellow is out of the question.

The publicity chief is in a stew. He has just made a rapid tally and discovered that there are as many directors as there are colors in the rainbow. The problem thus appears insoluble. Bravely he plays his last card. "And why not black?"

But here the opposition is unanimous. Black? Send for the mortician.

"As for the figure," the Governor adds, "it's a 'pin-up' — isn't that what they call it these days? She's attractive, all right, but it seems to me that the slope of the breast —"

Whereupon all chime in at once, for if each of these gentlemen is an expert in his particular province, all of them are furiously competent when it comes to busts.

The Chairman glances at his wrist watch and in a discreet voice puts an end to the recreation.

"Time flies, gentlemen, and our agenda is pretty crowded. I therefore propose that we go on to more serious matters."

If it is not that, then it is this:

The scene — March 9, 3 P.M. On his agenda pad the Big Chief has made a note of the appointment and its purpose: "Guérin. Find a slogan."

"What we need," declares the Big Chief, "is a real knockout of a slogan. You see what I mean, a slogan like — but no, when you set these ringing phrases down on paper, they sound as flat as pancakes. Their force comes from being repeated millions of times.

"We should be able to hit on something. We must imagine, invent, create. It's difficult, I know, but what the devil, we have brains, haven't we? Now there must be a method of going about this.

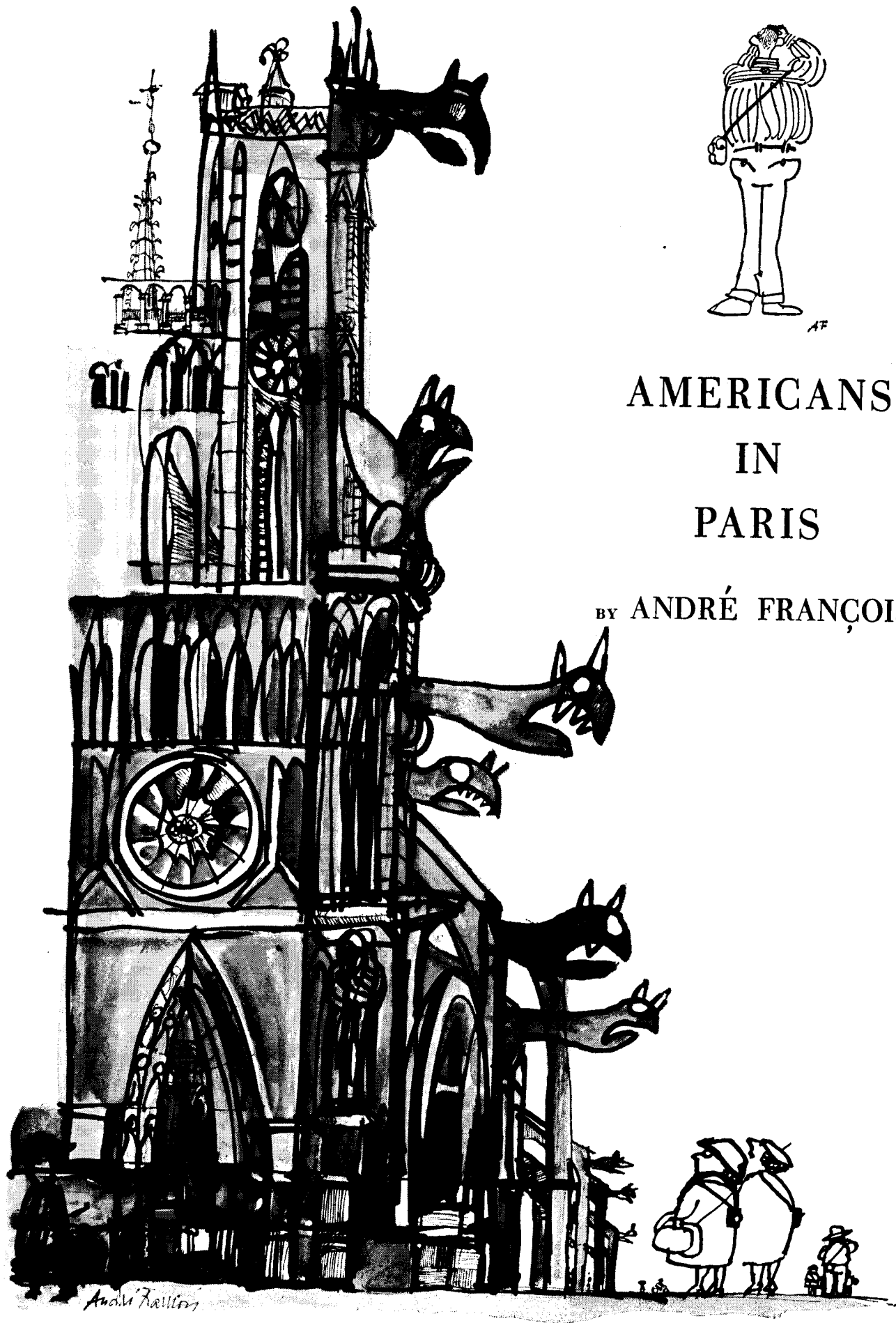
"What about the small Larousse — or even the big one? We ought to be able to find something in that. Five or six words of the French language — all we have to do is to pick them out and arrange them. Unless perhaps we hit on some foreign word, or some picturesque, compelling piece of slang, or even some new, specially coined expression? A slogan is nothing but a simple phrase, something ear-catching and easily rememberable which conjures up the product's qualities, something popular and childishly simple, like —

"No, Mademoiselle, tell him I'm not here. I don't want to be disturbed. That goose has upset my train of thought. And just when I had something terrific on the tip of my tongue.

"What's the matter, my dear Guérin? Are you, the specialist, running out of inspiration? So far all the ideas have come from me.

"But wait, what on earth is the time? Heavens, and I have a dinner in town! We still haven't got our slogan. But believe me, all this cerebral rummaging won't have been in vain. Tonight my subconscious will work on it, and tomorrow I bet you I'll have it."

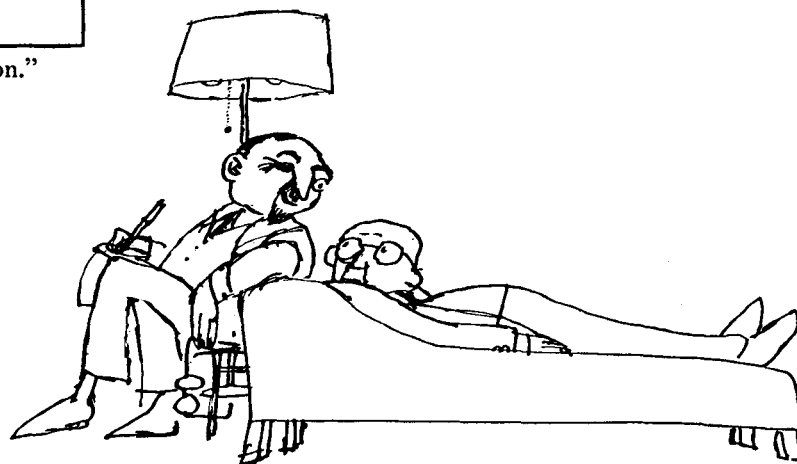
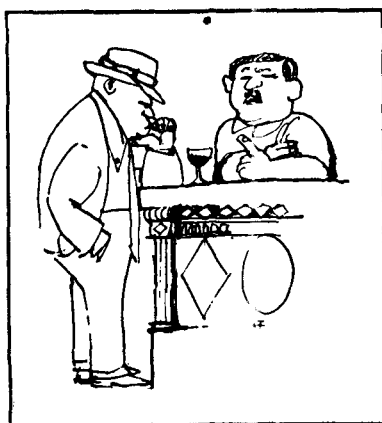
March 10, 8 A.M. "Hallo, did I wake you up?" The voice at the other end of the line is abnormally contained, the voice of someone who knows how to play an ace. "*Mon cher*, I have found a terrific slogan, one which says everything. When I think that you've been floundering about for six months and that I finally had to bail you out. Well, you won't get a better one. Just listen: 'X — the Great French Brand!'"



AMERICANS IN PARIS

BY ANDRÉ FRANÇOIS

"It's lovely here, I only wish they were more friendly."



PRINCE OF GASTRONOMES



Curnonsky

BY SAMUEL CHAMBERLAIN

Etcher, writer, and photographer,
SAMUEL CHAMBERLAIN *has lived for many years in*
France. Interested in French gastronomy ever
since he was an ambulance driver with the French
Army in World War I, he is the author of CLEM-
ENTINE IN THE KITCHEN and BOUQUET DE FRANCE.

OBSERVANT diners in many Parisian restaurants today will see a small, discreet brass plaque fastened to the wall above the banquette. In the exclusive Chez Taillevent, near the Étoile, it appears over a choice seat by the window. In one of the best bistros in Paris, La Chope Danton on the Left Bank, it occupies an inconspicuous spot under the spiral staircase. In a hundred or more other restaurants it discreetly announces that this seat was once occupied by "Curnonsky, Prince Élu des Gastronomes."

To many people this will prove an introduction to the foremost French epicure of his day, a rotund, genial man with a gates-ajar collar, a twinkle in his eyes, and a prodigious gastronomic reputation. Restaurants vied with one another to wine and dine him. Dining clubs found Curnonsky's presence essential if their banquets were to be a success. Writers of cookbooks felt that a preface by him meant the difference between success and failure.

Drawing by Georges Villa, copyright Librairie Larousse

The pseudonym of Curnonsky which this famous gourmand adopted leads to the false assumption that he was of Slavic origin, whereas he couldn't have been more French. He was born Maurice-Edmond Sailland on October 12, 1872, in the historic city of Angers on the River Maine. His parents belonged to an old Royalist family dating back fifteen generations to 1427. Young Maurice-Edmond studied at the College Stanislas and the Institut Catholique, and showed an early ambition to become a journalist.

To assure the boy of a tranquil old age, his parents invested his inheritance in Panama and Russian loans, with the result that he reached his majority without a sou, and with absolutely no sense of worry about the future. He plunged into the journalistic whirlpool of Paris with gusto, writing articles for *La Vie Parisienne* and collaborating with Paul-Jean Toulet in the authorship of early volumes bearing the rather startling titles of *Le Bréviaire des Courtisanes* and *Le Métier d'Amant*. One is impressed by the self-assurance of these dashing young men, who also felt qualified, a year or so later, to publish a book called *Demi-Veuve*. In spite of his sudden sophistication, youthful Monsieur Sailland also wrote articles for a children's magazine called *Qui Lit Rit*. The budding boulevardier met many celebrities in those early years. He interviewed Émile Zola, who asked him about his Polish-sounding name. He met Colette in her youth, and they remained lifelong friends. Being a Royalist sympathizer, he came to know Léon Daudet, another friendship which endured for decades.

The pen name of "Curnonsky" is the result of an exuberant, youthful impulse which he later regretted. At the age of eighteen he decided upon this Latin-Slav pen name composed of two Latin

syllables, *cur non* (why not), and one Slavic flourish, *sky*, supposedly inspired by his admiration for Dostoevski. It might be translated as "Whynot-ski," a name which seems quite fitting for the line-up of a Middle-Western football team.

In later life the man from Angers found the name to be a confusing bore, a hybrid "as barbarous as 'autocar' or 'aerobus,'" and worse, a name which led people to believe that he was either Russian or Polish when in reality he was a total, vociferous, almost xenophobic Frenchman. But by this time his literary career had been launched, and it was too late to change. Curnonsky he remained, though Sailland could have strangled him!

Curnonsky's name caused him a good deal of trouble. At the outbreak of World War I he had a hard time escaping arrest as a "Russian spy in the pay of the Bulgarians." Again, in Vienne, on the banks of the Rhone, he was mistaken for Léon Daudet, who had just escaped from the Santé prison by means of a famous telephone hoax, and Curnonsky was held for six hours in the police station. He made the mistake of producing two identity cards, one for each name, a phenomenon which the police found *pas naturel*. Luckily the victim had a friend in Vienne who cleared up the matter by telephone. Even luckier, this friend was dining at the time with the *sous-préfet* at the establishment of the most famous of all French restaurateurs, Fernand Point. The story ends as a Curnonsky story should — with the newly released suspect joining the superintendent of police to make a foursome at the table.

When Curnonsky's name came up for the Legion of Honor, the Minister of Public Instruction, at the time Louis Barthou, looked up his dossier and found two police folders instead of one. The Sailland folder was in good shape, saying that he was a Royalist to be watched and that he dined nearly every week with the pretender to the title of Duc de Guise and other Royalist notables at a restaurant (presumably Voisin) on the Rue St. Roch.

But his Curnonsky folder was a sizzler: "Dangerous anarchist, without a fixed domicile since 1912. Took part in riots in the Latin Quarter in 1893; has frequented anarchist meetings and contributed to avant-garde pamphlets. . . . *Relations très suspectes*: has cohabited for two years, from 1904 to 1906, with *la fille* Sonuskaw, nihilist spy, disappeared since 1908. Has made many trips to Asia (China, Indochina, the Philippines) and to Spain, Switzerland, Belgium, and England. Too often absent."

Louis Barthou, who knew Curnonsky's true reputation well, remarked that the balance of these reports produced "an excellent liberal Re-

publican" and promptly decorated him. Curnonsky admitted later that "my buttonhole still blushes from it!"

As his reputation as a boulevardier and humorist grew, Curnonsky wrote increasingly of gastronomy. He was one of the first writers to recognize and promote the liaison between good food and automobile travel. With this in mind he undertook a remarkable series of little books on *La France Gastronomique* in collaboration with a witty fellow with flowing hair, Marcel Rouff. There were twenty-eight of these small, paper-bound volumes, size 4¾ by 6 inches. The first one, which appeared in 1921 and cost three and a half francs, was devoted to that truffle-scented gamboling ground for the gastronome, Périgord. The whole series is now a rarity, and most of the booklets have become collectors' items.

The two itinerant food tasters were carefree and debonair in those days. Curnonsky was in his plump middle age, untroubled by worrisome advice from his doctor. They covered the French countryside in a venerable automobile and were careful not to mention the mishaps which overtook them. In later years Curnonsky admitted to a total of twenty-three motor accidents! But they did give details about rural French restaurants and hotels, coupled with regional recipes and suggestions of specialties which would please the wandering "gastronomad," a word of Curnonsky's own coining. They also warned motorists of the *coup de fusil*, the unjustified overcharge that awaited unwary travelers in some "palaces."

Curnonsky apparently agreed with Alexandre Dumas that "Ideas are like nails: the more you hammer, the deeper they go," for he pounded away insistently on a few favorite themes throughout these little books and his later work as well. He pointed out repeatedly that there are four cuisines in France, not just one, each with rewards to the epicure: *la haute cuisine*, *la cuisine regionale*, *la cuisine bourgeoise*, *la cuisine paysanne*.

He wrote at length on the virtues of each, but never ceased to sound the trumpet for simple cooking, citing the great Escoffier, who, for all his complicated sauces and involved recipes, had this final word of advice to French cooks: "*Faites simple!*" Curnonsky, the veteran of more than four thousand banquets, was never happier than when seated before a dinner prepared by a French housewife, claiming that nothing equals the honest cooking in the home of a Breton fisherman, a Pyrenees farmer, or a vineyard tender in his native Anjou. "Her dinner is always delicious: a good hot soup, two main dishes, a bit of cheese or fruit,

a good wine of the country, and a hot cup of black coffee. Nothing can be better!" He championed the household classics: a simple *gigot*, a *poule au riz*, a *pot-au-feu*, or a cutlet cooked *à point*. "The best French cooking is here, where sauces prolong the taste of a dish without ever disguising it."

A PROFESSIONAL diner-out who rarely paid for a meal, Curnonsky sought the simplest Paris restaurants when he had a night off from banqueting. Very often he would go to an unostentatious place called the Restaurant Couteau on the Avenue d'Orléans, now renamed the Avenue du Général Leclerc. It was here that I was introduced to the Prince of Gastronomes by Monsieur Couteau, the owner. This genial restaurateur, by the way, had quite a story behind him. His ancestors were butchers for Joan of Arc at Orléans, and took the name Couteau centuries ago. But his restaurant has long since disappeared. Its heyday was in the twenties.

Monsieur Sailland (as he was called there) liked the Restaurant Couteau for the perfection of its simple dishes. Here he could be certain of having his classic leg of lamb with Soissons beans, his *blanquette de veau* enriched with egg and cream, his thick *tournedos* with *pommes pailles* and grilled mushrooms. I have seen him there often, napkin tucked high in his waistcoat, waiting impatiently for his perfect dish. He had a particular affection for Monsieur Couteau's Saint Jean-de-Braye, a red wine from the neighborhood of Orléans which, believe it or not, benefited from being iced. A wine bucket containing a cool carafe of this wine was the first thing to appear at his table. He had a horror of drinking water, and referred to himself as a "dedicated hydrophobe." "I have an iron stomach, and water would surely rust it" was one of his often quoted sayings.

He was a portly man and wore amply tailored clothes which allowed a maximum of comfort. His wing collar had its gates far enough apart to allow plenty of space for his imposing double chin. His neck bulged pleasantly over the back of his collar as well. What hair he had bristled out behind like a thinning brush. The rosette of the Legion of Honor glistened in his lapel. His mustache was inconspicuous, and his eyes inclined to be half closed. But he had a look of beatitude, especially when dining upon one of his cherished *plats simples*.

The distinction which pleased him more than any other was bestowed upon him in 1927 when the newspaper *Paris-Soir* and a culinary magazine conducted a plebiscite among chefs, epicures, *cordons bleus*, hotel and restaurant men throughout

France. As a result Curnonsky received more than three thousand votes and was awarded the title of "Prince Élu des Gastronomes." He responded with enthusiasm and modesty, disclaiming any royal form of address except one: "*Sa Rondeur* — Your Plumpness!" But the title always appeared in his subsequent writings.

The next year Curnonsky founded l'Académie des Gastronomes, a group of forty of the most gifted connoisseurs of food and wine in France. He belonged to dozens of other dining clubs: Le Grand Perdreau (a publishers' club), La Serviette au Cou, Les Amis de la Table, and was founder of the Diner du Quatorze and dean of the Anciens du Chez Maxim's. His name was considered essential on the masthead of all gastronomic clubs but one. This was not open to him — the revered Club des Cent, which restricts its membership to amateur gourmards. Curnonsky definitely was an old pro.

During the late thirties the Prince Elect of Gastronomes made a second trip to the Orient. He spoke fondly of his travels "*à travers les deux mondes, sans compter le demi*." During his trip to China he met many epicures who readily agreed that there are but two cuisines in this world, French and Chinese. This was quite an admission from Curnonsky, who was almost violently patriotic on the question of national cookery. He never traveled to America but had such total contempt for American culinary achievements that his remarks are really embarrassing. His indignation flared especially high on the much debated subject of *Homard à l'américaine*. Is this the correct name for this famous lobster dish, or is it *Homard à l'armoricaine*, thus paying tribute to its Breton origin? (Actually, of course, the dish has much more the savor of Mediterranean Provence than of Brittany.)

THE Prince of Gastronomes, a dinner guest on countless occasions, had no facilities for repaying his hosts. He had neither a cook, a kitchen, a wine cellar, nor even a dining room. His apartment on the Square Henri-Bergson, near the Place Saint-Augustin, was modest. He was a lifelong bachelor, and gourmet clubs, restaurants, and literary societies considered it a rare privilege to have him as a guest. At banquets, seated at the head table, solemnly appraising the food and wine brought before him, he could always be counted upon for some Gallic witticisms, reminiscent reveries, and a few reverberating words on the glory of *la cuisine française*.

Though exact statistics are not available, close friends estimate that he sat through more than four thousand banquets in Paris and the provinces

during his epicurean career. His engagement book was usually filled three months ahead, and every night he had a multicourse French dinner with a full complement of wines. All of these years of high dining were unable to ruin his digestive system. But they had an alarming effect on his waistline. At the age of sixty he achieved a fine rotundity of two hundred and seventy-seven pounds, and admitted that once he had almost touched three hundred. This was a bit uncomfortable, he admitted, but pointed out that nobody would take his gastronomic mission seriously if he looked like an emaciated fakir. Alexandre Dumas, after all, was *dodu*, and Rossini, the composer, didn't see his feet for six years. Both were dedicated gourmands, as was Victor Hugo, a "mighty and indiscriminate eater."

The Prince was able to perform this prodigious feat of gastronomy by omitting luncheon completely and limiting himself to a small cup of black coffee for breakfast. Though his hours were irregular, he ordinarily had a late dinner, after which he wrote in the small hours of the morning and then slept between eight in the morning and three or four in the afternoon. He ascribed his robust good health to a reasonable indulgence in all excesses and a nonchalant scorn of all sports. He was boastful of the fact that he had never been seated on a horse or a bicycle. He had never played golf, tennis, or football, nor had he boxed, rowed, or learned to swim. "Doubtless my corpulence permits me to float, but not advance." Strangely enough, he cared neither for hunting nor for fishing, but contented himself at being a passable champion at *belote*, the revered classic among café card games. But there is another side to the picture. He was a pioneer air passenger and a fanatic for automobile travel, the faster the better.

The restrictions that accompanied the outbreak of World War II put an immediate damper on Curnonsky's professional career. By 1940 he confessed that "my plate threatens very soon to be as empty as my purse." One of his most spirited forewords was prepared for a pathetic and courageous little paper-bound book published under German occupation in 1940 entitled *La Cuisine d'Aujourd'hui*. It was written by a fellow gastronome, Gaston Derys, and contained valuable ideas on how to make jams without sugar and mashed potato without milk or butter. There was no place for Curnonsky's former dictum, "nothing replaces butter," in this practical little volume for the wartime housewife in France. It was a period of discouragement for the thinning Angevin. He felt, as did Racine's hero: "*Grâce au ciel, mon malheur passe mon espérance.*" His journalistic career suffered a total eclipse, and so, apparently, did his

finances. Approaching seventy, he decided to leave Paris for the duration and to sit out the war in the solitude of a Breton village. But characteristically he chose his village carefully, settling upon the hamlet of Riec-sur-Belon in Finistère. The most famous citizen of Riec was Madame Mélanie Rouat, owner of a gracious little inn and known as the best cook in Brittany.

Here he stayed, quietly and anonymously, for the better part of six years. Reading matter was hard to come by in this remote village, but sets of the classics still remained on library shelves. Curnonsky reread his Racine and Molière, wrote a few brief essays, and took his one meal a day in company with his Breton hostess, a plump, benign woman crowned by a wonderful lace coif embellished with wide lavender ribbons. Fate decreed that Mélanie should abandon her casseroles, her inn, and her oyster beds only a few months before Curnonsky indulged in his last banquet. We know little of the women in Curnonsky's life, although he once admitted to being married to "*cent jolies filles*," but the one who makes the best reading was the one most beyond reproach.

WITH the war over, and his weight down to a trim one hundred and seventy-six pounds, *le vieux Prince* returned to Paris with much the same zest he had shown at the turn of the century. He founded two new magazines, *La France à Table* and *Cuisine et Vins de France*, both of which are still prospering. He launched a new cookbook, *Bons Plats, Bons Vins*, filled with recipes from famous chefs from all over the country. He experienced not the slightest difficulty in collecting material for this fat volume. A request from Curnonsky was enough to start a flow of fabulous recipes from chefs everywhere. He emphasized the fact that he was an editor, not a cook. "I have too much respect for the culinary art to pose either as a chef or a *cordons bleu*. I have only been a fisher of pearls, Madame, but I think I can offer you a rather pretty necklace of them."

By 1948 his pace seems to have slowed down, as he published a little book of literary sketches under the title of *À Travers Mon Binocle*. It was reminiscent and gay in spots, but the picture that passed before his binoculars was also a trifle melancholy. He called himself "*un Français moyen . . . et myope*," and he worried about the world's sadness.

But two years later, with a fine change of pace, he brought out *La Table et L'Amour*, a delicate treatise on the desirability of adding gastronomy to Cupid's forces. There were tactful warnings about truffles, "great inspirers of tenderness,"

and toward the end a wistful confession that "The joys of the table are those that remain to console us for the loss of other joys."

For all his banqueting and his advancing years, *le vieux Prince* remained a tireless writer. For the Librairie Larousse he undertook the compilation of an ambitious cookbook bearing the same title as the magazine he founded — *Cuisines et Vins de France*. This richly illustrated volume of eight hundred and fifty-six pages, published in 1953 when Curnonsky was over eighty, ranks with the great works on gastronomy, a fitting climax to a prolific writing career.

During his nightly banquets the old gentleman put on as good a show as ever, but when he was off the scene he was often melancholy. One sum-

mer day in 1956, Maurice-Edmond Sailland, aged eighty-three years, enfeebled by dieting and uremia, accidentally toppled out of the window of his fourth-floor flat into the courtyard below. Thus in a few seconds the career of the genial Prince of Gastronomes and President of the Academy of French Humor came to a sudden end. Amid consternation and disbelief, countless friends came to the church of Saint-Augustin to bid farewell to a friend they considered imperishable.

Charles Monselet, the noted epicure of the early nineteenth century, wrote that "*un gourmet est un être agréable au ciel*," an observation which leads one to hope that the gay and gallant Curnonsky has found his true reward, and a six-course dinner with appropriate wines, in heaven.

YVES BONNEFOY

VRAI NOM

*Je nommerai désert ce château que tu fus,
Nuit cette voix, absence ton visage,
Et quand tu tomberas dans la terre stérile
Je nommerai néant l'éclair qui t'a porté.*

*Mourir est un pays que tu aimais. Je viens
Mais éternellement par tes sombres chemins.
Je détruis ton désir, ta forme, ta mémoire,
Je suis ton ennemi qui n'aura de pitié.*

*Je te nommerai guerre et je prendrai
Sur toi les libertés de la guerre et j'aurai
Dans mes mains ton visage obscur et traversé,
Dans mon coeur ce pays qu'illumine l'orage.*

REAL NAME

This castle of your being I will name desert,
Night this voice, absence your face,
And when you drop into the barren earth
I will name void the lightning which has borne you.

Dying is a country that you loved. I come
But forever along your dark paths.
I destroy your past, your shape, your memory;
I am your pitiless enemy.

I will name you war and I will take
All liberties of war with you and I will have
In my hands your face somber and crossed,
In my heart this country lit by the storm.

Translated by SIMON WATSON TAYLOR

ALICE B. TOKLAS

FIFTY YEARS OF FRENCH FASHIONS

*An intimate friend of Gertrude Stein,
ALICE B. TOKLAS still lives,
surrounded by Picasso and Juan Gris
paintings, in the old Left Bank apartment
in Paris which they
once inhabited together.*



Q UITE naturally *haute couture* commenced for me in Paris. I was nearly nine years old when my parents reached Paris on their way home from a European tour. My mother wasted no time, but went directly to Monsieur Worth to order the dresses, coats, and suits she was to take back to San Francisco with her. They opened my eyes, fired my imagination, and formed a standard for creative dressmaking. They did the same thing to my mother's friends when she got home and wore the clothes. Spanish lace was draped by Monsieur Worth himself, held in place on the shoulder by paste buckles; the *décolletage* back and front was almost to the waist. My mother said that depended upon one's anatomy.

In San Francisco there were several French dressmakers who went to Paris once or twice a year not only for the styles but for materials as well. One of them returned with sufficient white satin brocaded with large red roses for three dresses. One of these was made for a very handsome blonde debutante, another for the intellectual mistress of a magistrate and regent of the

university, the third for a dashing young woman of dubious reputation. How could the dressmaker foresee that the dresses would all meet on the same night in the foyer of the Opera House?

When I came to Paris in 1907, Monsieur Worth and Les Soeurs Callot were the fashionable dressmakers and were guiding the *haute couture* in the direction in which they thought it should go. Monsieur Worth wished to keep the old fashion, with its elegant long trains and huge feather fans. The Soeurs Callot, on the other hand, believed in small embroideries and delicate colors. The results seemed less enticing to me than they had when I was a child. Modern paintings had entered my consciousness and *couture*, even *haute couture*, was coming to have less and less meaning for me and less importance. Still, from time to time there would be a lovely creature whose intrinsic beauty was made more evident by the dress that she was wearing, especially designed for her.

During that period and until after World War I, it was the custom to design particularly for certain clients. Strictly speaking, there were no

collections in those days. A few models were shown with the exclusive material made for that dressmaker. The designer was in the salon with his pencil and large pad to make drawings he considered suitable for his client.

This continued until the war of 1914 when Chanel, who never really became *haute couture*, emerged from her little shop of pull-overs and skirts to become a fashionable dressmaker. She launched a simple dress, belted, with short skirt, sleeves, and rounded collar. It required no subtlety to design and to wear. Poiret, who was an adventurous innovator and lover of novelty (he was one of the first to acclaim Josephine Baker when she appeared in Paris), took the diametrically opposite direction. He found his inspiration in the Levant, Persia, Asia, and China, in the divided skirt, in bright scarves with deep gold fringes and heavily brocaded silks. Just before the war he designed a very wide, very long *mousseline* scarf of a rich magenta hue, with a deep green-gold fringe, for Picasso's friend, Fernande Olivier, which he gave her as a gift. But Worth held fast to his tradition, and ladies remained ladies.

Not long after World War I the greatly gifted Madame Madeleine Vionnet came upon the scene. In her quiet, precise manner she sat on the floor of her workroom and cut, pinned, and sewed her tarlatan models, half the size of live models. These she would give to her seamstresses, who made the full-size models in the materials of her choice. No one was allowed to enter the workroom. Once when the American wife of a French prince appeared in the doorway, Madame Vionnet waved her away. Even for royalty she made no exceptions. Their measurements and coloring sufficed. She was enamored of texture as well as of color. One of her creations — a white sleeveless evening dress of *mousseline* with apple-green silk grapevines — was shown under glass at the Guimet Museum. The appliqué grapevines were so dispersed as to make a composition worthy of a great draftsman. Madame Vionnet has founded a museum of dresses, which is under the direction of the Beaux-Arts and to which other dressmakers have contributed.

At Pierre Balmain's seasonal showing of models, it has been my privilege and pleasure to share with her the place of honor at the head of the room. She has by her perspicacious observations as the mannequins approach and turn taught me a great deal. All the points of elegance touch her — line, color, design, but above all the way material is used.

It was natural that when I first saw a collection

of Balenciaga's I should be seduced by its Spanish beauty, as I had been a generation earlier by things Spanish — Spain and Spaniards. Gertrude Stein used to say that I saw things clearly; that is, everything except Spain and Spaniards. Balenciaga's collection was a reawakening of the ecstasy of that early love. The mannequins, as I was told later, were all French, but they wore their clothes and had the air of tragic gloom reminiscent of Juana la Loca.

Monsieur Balenciaga is a Basque from San Sebastián. Long ago we had spent a week in June at San Sebastián to cool off under the umbrella pines from the heat of Madrid. Balenciaga's color, design, architecture come into being there on a very hot, early Sunday morning when a distant church bell is clanging. How otherwise explain the unexpected mysticism that suddenly makes a dress more real than reality? And this Balenciaga can do and does from time to time, as when he makes a Madrileña, who has held us enthralled, an even more beautiful *grande dame*. Indeed, his mannequins with their hair severely pulled back from the forehead and gathered together on the crown of the head with sprays of flowers or feathery material take on the bearing required to wear the dresses designed for them, and they approach the beauty, reserve, and dignity of the ladies of the Spanish capital. There are, of course, some French clients and even a few Americans who achieve this. Once, after the parade of the mannequins was over, I saw a plain and not too young compatriot completely transformed by stepping into one of Balenciaga's dresses. I have had a delicately woven gray grass-cloth Balenciaga scarf with narrow gray lines since the early days of the Liberation, and it has become an object to treasure.

Some of the dressmakers have designed jewelry more suitable as objects to place on a table than to wear. There is in one of my closets a carved coral object, inspired by the dwarf gardens of Japan. It is neither jewelry nor garden. My three great dressmakers, Madame Vionnet, Balenciaga, and Balmain, have never indulged in such decorations, but not infrequently jewelers will lend them a few priceless gems to be worn with evening dresses.

Accessories are of importance — gloves, umbrellas, parasols, slippers, even fans. By their line and the manner in which they are carried, they emphasize the character of an original invention. Actually, taste and elegance are the basis of enduring fashion.

At the beginning of the German occupation in 1940, Gertrude Stein and I became acquainted with Pierre Balmain, and he quickly became one

of our friends. He was then designing for Lucien Lelong.

Balmain's first collection in September of 1945 was small but original. Two of the salient points of the time were noticeable: the tops of the sleeves were never trimmed, the free movement of the limbs was never impeded. Women consciously or unconsciously appreciated this. Not only were they comfortable in Balmain dresses, coats, and wraps, but they did not have to struggle to keep folds in place; sashes and trains stayed where they belonged. The entire garment had a life of its own. It asked nothing of you but to wear it graciously. More and more Pierre Balmain became interested in emphasizing the beauty of the female form as Manet and Renoir used it in their portraits of women — as a decoration and composition. As he became more impressed by their elegance and style, he designed dresses of striped silk and velvet of contrasting colors. With this new influence and the change of headdress, hats, and accessories, mannequins became living Manets and Renoirs. It is astonishing how women change physically to resemble the style of the moment.

When we went to that first collection, Gertrude Stein was wearing a tailored suit that Balmain had made for her, and I a garden dress he had made for me. (It is still obviously designed by a great *couturier*.) As we were going into the rooms where the collection was about to be shown, I said to Gertrude Stein: "Be sure you don't tell anybody that we are wearing clothes made by Pierre Balmain. We look like gypsies."

Later, during the winter, he made an imperial evening suit for Gertrude Stein of brown velvet heavily embroidered in jet, and a heavily embroidered jet cap from which a long tassel flowed.

The time had come, however, for Balmain to discard such excellent influences as those of Renoir and Manet and to turn to his own inspiration. He found himself through the use of embroidery and appliqué, first unostentatiously on the front of bodices, cuffs, and collars. Little by little, it became more elaborate. The embroidery was enhanced by sequins, by eighteenth-century ribbon embroidery, by ribbon, by small tassels, by beads, by tiny colored stones, spangles, and rhinestones. For these embroideries he drew his own designs, taken from historical models, at first from the Latin countries, then from Asian and even from Polynesian countries.

This decoration threw the emphasis on the line, which became simplified or complicated according to the inspiration of the moment, never interfering, however, with the free movement of the body, though the length of the steps might be reduced to a matter of inches. To emphasize the line he used stitched bands on wool, flowing scarves on silk, and finally artificial flowers and even ostrich feathers on evening dresses. None of these inventions was shocking, because, good Frenchman that he is, he remained ever in the tradition of the *haute couture* — even in this period of chaos. Sputniks are not his concern: the survival of the fittest in French *haute couture* is.

From what may be called the modern Balmain classics, he has permitted his imagination to stray in extravagantly designing costumes for fancy-dress balls, which were fashionable a few years ago in Paris, and for those in Venice, which were more international in character. But these are diversions; Pierre Balmain's real concern is to continue to create *haute couture*. He told me that his greatest pleasure had been to find recently in Rome a client wearing a coat which he made for her two years previously and which had not become old-fashioned. It was beyond fashion.

Fashion is the best propaganda in which France indulges. For though France is accused of chauvinism, she is an indifferent propagandist. In wartime she is too occupied in defending her frontiers, or too overcome by the invasion of her country by the enemy. In peacetime she is too indifferent to what foreigners may be thinking of her. It is, however, a deep satisfaction to us Americans who know and love France to see the way *haute couture* unconsciously has made friends for France in our country.

It is surprising how the fame of French *haute couture* has penetrated into the most unexpected crannies of America's Middle West. A number of times in the last few years Americans employed in universities in the corn belt have written to ask me how they can see French collections. Would this not help them to understand the artistic nature of one of France's most creative activities? One wishes that the French Foreign Office or the *couturiers* would do something about this. Would this not be an aid to international peace, and who better than France could undertake this task? Has anyone ever heard of American or, for that matter, other women being interested in German or Russian *haute couture*?

PIERRE GASCAR has won both the *Prix des Critiques* and the *Prix Goncourt*. "*The Tomatoes*" is an excerpt from his new novel, *THE SEED*, which has been translated by Merloyd Lawrence and will be published next fall under the Atlantic-Little, Brown imprint.

THE TOMATOES

BY PIERRE GASCAR

... **T**HEY really were not fruit at all; their acid juices reddened the sluggish streams of the town, filled the gutters with millions of tiny seeds, dripping like a murky kind of blood between the iron gratings. This thick blood, the slimy seeds, the acid aroma in the air — all this was the ripening of tomatoes in August.

The factory where my twelve-year-old friends were hired for seven francs a day to stand, dazed, in puddles of juice and swarms of flies, was a cannery. It bought up the surplus fruit, tons of flooding, overripe tomatoes with skin that was already wrinkled and ready to burst at the touch. When the carts arrived, they were more often bailed out than unloaded. Through the heat of summer, the town bore this open wound, this factory where men, women, and children staggered under pails of thick red pulp and seeds, dumping and stirring them into huge vats out of whose treacherous eddies they quickly skimmed the rolled petals of skin. They had to earn their seven francs.

Every few days the factory would choke, would be oversupplied, and would have to send away the rest of the tomatoes. Then, at noon, when the streets were drugged with heat, the carts drawn by a pair of oxen and piled high with crates of tomatoes would pass slowly through the town while the farmer recited his dismal cry to the women who sat in the doorways. He offered the crates for five cents. Soon he was almost ready to pay anyone who would lighten his load. The harvest had become a curse upon him.

After they had crossed the entire town, some of the farmers went to empty their crates in the river. There they talked among themselves while the yoked oxen, covered with flies, twitched in the sun. For lunch the men looked for tomatoes that were still green, that had been kept from ripening by the shade of a tree or a wall. In the midst of all this putrefying ripeness, they sought

the tang of half-mature fruit, the tardy freshness that tasted of less prolific seasons.

Sometimes, on Sunday, a dance floor was set up in the market place. Around this, itinerant showmen set up their booths. One of them was made of canvas tied to a wooden frame, in front of which a counter was set up with crates under either end. At the back of this shed, behind a net that was strung all the way across but was low enough for a man to stand with his head above it, was an individual with a blackened face and an old top hat.

Crates, some full of tomatoes and some already empty, were lined up in front of the shed. Beside them stood a crony of the man with the blackened face. For five cents he would place a dozen tomatoes on the table for any comer. Then, above the net, the make-believe Negro would start to roll his eyes and utter his incomprehensible but goading cries. The game was on.

Dressed in their Sunday best or in shirt sleeves, the men, farmers and factory workers, leaned over from the waist, pressing their stomachs against the wooden counter, and, still groggy from their midday dinner, threw the ripe tomatoes at the black face, which appeared and disappeared behind the net and sometimes caught the missile full in the face with a loud splash.

When the top hat fell off, the laughter resounded. Disappearing again behind the net, the make-believe Negro caught his breath and wiped his face as he looked for his hat. The men swore at him, holding their tomatoes ready to throw. If he was able, once in a while, by dipping swiftly behind the net or teetering back and forth like a bear, to dodge their shots, the men threw twice as hard. They squeezed the tomatoes for a long time in their tightened fists. The juice ran between their fingers. They paid no attention to it but concentrated entirely on their prey. Their jaws were grim and set. A strong, latent anger that had smoldered all through the burning summer while they worked themselves to death from dawn to dusk, and earned almost nothing, made them hurl the tomatoes in deadly seriousness.

The shorter ones swung an arm out behind them and doubled it back like the crack of a whip, while the tall ones waved their arms like stiff flails, with heavy fists at the end that suddenly opened and spread out empty fingers. Pulp and juice covered the floor of the booth and its canvas walls and glistened on the blackened face that bobbed up and down in a ferocious kind of expiation. In the lulls of the battle, instead of wiping the dripping make-up off his face, the mock Negro primed himself with warm wine which he gulped out of a dark green bottle. . . .

This excerpt has been translated by Wallace Fowlie. The complete poem is to appear shortly in the Bollingen Series.

Excerpt from
SEAMARKS

BY SAINT-JOHN PERSE

*. . . À ton côté rangée, comme la rame à fond de
barque; à ton côté roulée, comme la voile avec la vergue,
au bas du mât liée . . . Un million de bulles plus
qu'heureuses, dans le sillage et sous la quille . . . Et
la mer elle-même, notre songe, comme une seule et vaste
ombelle . . . Et son million de capitules, de florules en
voie de dissémination . . .*

*Survivance, ô sagesse! Fraternité d'orage et qui
s'éloigne, paupières meurtries, du bleu d'orage . . .
Ouvre ta paume, bonheur d'être . . . Et qui donc était
là, qui n'est plus que bienfait? Un pas s'éloigne en moi
qui n'est point de mortelle. Des voyageurs au loin voy-
agent que nous n'avons interpellés. Tendez la tente
imprégnée d'or, ô pur ombrage d'après-vivre . . .*

*Et la grande aile silencieuse qui si longtemps fut
telle, à notre poupe, oriente encore dans le songe, oriente
encore sur les eaux, nos corps qui se sont tant aimés, nos
coeurs qui se sont tant émus . . . Au loin la course d'une
dernière vague, haussant plus haut l'offrande de son mors
. . . Je t'aime — tu es là — et tout l'immense bonheur
d'être qui là fut consommé.*

*Allez plus doucement, ô cours les choses à leur fin.
La mort navigue dans la mort et n'a souci du vif. La nuit
salée nous porte dans ses flancs. Et nous, nous desserrons
l'étreinte de nos bras pour écouter et nous régner la mer
sans rives ni récifs. Passion très forte et très docile.
Mille paupières favorables . . .*

*Et l'amante bat des cils dans tout ce lieu très calme.
La mer égale m'environne et m'ouvre la cime de ses
palmes. J'entends battre du sang et sève égale et nour-
ricière — ô songe encore que j'allote! Et ma lèvre est
salée du sel de ta naissance, et ton corps est salé du sel de
ma naissance . . . Tu es là, mon amour, et je n'ai lieu
qu'en toi.*

*. . . Laid at your side, like the oar in the bottom
of the boat; rolled at your side, like the sail with
the yard, lashed at the foot of the mast . . . A
million bubbles more than happy in the wake and
beneath the keel . . . And the sea itself, our
dream, like a single vast umbel . . . And its
million of flowerheads and florets in course of
dissemination . . .*

*Survival, O wisdom! Coolness of receding
storm, bruised eyelids, with the blue of the storm
. . . Open your palm, happiness of being . . .
And who was there, of whom nothing remained
but goodness? In me a step recedes which is not
of a mortal. Far away voyage travelers whom we
have not hailed. Pitch the tent impregnated with
gold, O pure shadow of afterglow . . .*

*And the great silent wing which was thus for so
long a time, at our stern, still directs in the dream,
still directs on the waters, our bodies which have
so greatly loved each other, our hearts which
have been so deeply moved . . . Afar, the course
of the one last wave, tossing higher the offering of
its bridle bit . . . I love you — you are here —
and all the immense joy of being which here was
consummated.*

*Go more gently, O course of things to their end.
Death sails in death and has no care for the living.
The salty night bears us in its flanks. And we
loosen the clasp of our arms to listen to the sea
without shores or reefs reigning in us. Passion
very strong and very docile. A thousand favorable
eyelids . . .*

*And the Woman who loves fans her eyelashes
in all this very great calm. The level sea surrounds
me and opens for me the fronds of its palms. I hear
beating in the blood the steady, nourishing sap —
O dream again that I nurse! And my lip is salty
with the salt of your birth, and your body is salty
with the salt of my birth . . . You are here, my
love, and I have no place save in you.*

BERNARD BUFFET

A Primitive
Among the Moderns



Self-portrait by Bernard Buffet

JEAN DUTOURD

A firm believer in the traditional values that have been the glory of France, JEAN DUTOURD is the author of THE TAXIS OF THE MARNE, which was a recent best seller in the United States.

I FIRST saw one of Buffet's canvases some years ago at Manosque at the house of the writer Jean Giono. Buffet was a young man at the time (he is thirty today), and no one had heard of him. Though his pictures already displayed the characteristic traits which subsequently ensured his success, no one bought them. I do not remember exactly how Buffet and Giono got to know each other. All I know is that Buffet was as poor as a church mouse and that Giono, who is kindness and helpfulness personified, lent him for a few months a small house he owned in the neighborhood of Manosque. There Buffet painted dozens and dozens of canvases: landscapes, portraits, coffee-pots, bottles, thistles, red herrings, and so on. In other words, he threw himself into that prodigious labor of production which every artist undertakes in his years of apprenticeship.

Giono, a great mind and a great writer, is also a man of simplicity and good humor, so that one respects him as a father and likes him as a pal. These are, at any rate, the feelings he inspires in me, his junior by thirty years, and I am certain that he inspires the same in Buffet, whom he understood, encouraged, and lodged at a time when this boy needed a powerful voice and a warm heart to convince him that he had talent and that he was on the right road.

Out of gratitude, and even more out of friendship, Buffet gave Giono several of the canvases he painted during his stay in Provence. I have seen these paintings many times. They are the work of a young man who was barely twenty years old, and they reveal a singularly precocious talent. What is

striking in them, above all, is that — young as he was — Buffet had already found his style. He was no longer looking for it. I remember clearly my surprise and my joy when Giono, with a kind of paternal pride, showed me a large, rectangular still life containing three or four stiff objects, smoke-colored and arthritic. It was not pretty, but it was beautiful. It was the work of a sad, austere. I would almost say Jansenist, painter — a painter gifted with a temperament exceptionally suited for a tragic period. Beyond this work of youth one could foresee a long procession of paintings, marking advances in inspiration and color; but the essential was already there, that is to say, a new sensibility in painting, an original representation of the world. I remember saying to Giono: “Your boy’s a bit scared of color, eh?” To which Giono replied: “Wait a bit. He’s starting to get bolder. Look — here’s a nice yellow. Right now he’s experimenting with red. A couple of years and you’ll see.”

These years have passed, and Buffet’s painting has grown considerably richer. He is famous. It is a tribute to French taste that it recognized a great painter in Buffet relatively quickly and that it rewarded him with an opulence which allows him to paint without cares or hindrances. He has now discovered color, which seemed to frighten him at the start of his career. He handles it better than any of his contemporaries do, but his strong and impeccable drawing does not suffer because of it.

BUFFET was born in 1928 into a modest Parisian family. His father seems to have taken no interest in him. The boy’s health was delicate and, as so often happens with young artists preoccupied with finding themselves, he was lonely and withdrawn. He had no friends, undoubtedly because young boys do not provide much intellectual stimulus to a child who somehow feels that he has in himself a creative gift. On the other hand, he liked his mother, whom he resembled; a fragile woman much given to melancholy. Today, as wealthy as a prosperous industrialist, Buffet says things like this: “Outside of me the universe is painful, hostile, dangerous. I think that everyone must have this feeling.” A remark which would be meat for psychiatrists.

At the age of fifteen he was only in the ninth grade. This shows how much he liked school-work, which he evidently found useless for both his vocation and his future. The director of his *lycée* wrote his parents that it was pointless for him to continue his studies, for “young Bernard has no gifts, except perhaps for drawing.”

Madame Buffet, desiring above all her son’s

happiness, let him enroll in the *École des Beaux-Arts*, despite the open horror which this establishment (even though it is conformist) inspires in the French *petite bourgeoisie*. Buffet’s talent for drawing immediately blossomed, but the school’s academicism brought him none of the great examples that his genius required. Just as young writers learn to write by tirelessly reading good authors, so young painters learn far more about their trade in museums than they do by listening to the advice of art teachers.

All disorder and anarchy in the realm of art, as in that of politics, end up by arousing a revolt, or let us say, a reaction. Buffet was violently thrust toward classicism — a natural reaction provoked in a strong, self-willed spirit by a spectacle of general incoherence. He has himself indicated the allies he chose in this battle against modern painting: Courbet, Carpaccio, and the Romanesque sculptors. This choice is judicious, as can be seen at once. Courbet and Carpaccio were great painters but not complete, unmatched geniuses like Rembrandt or Raphael; they still leave something to discover for anyone wishing to study them. So too with the Romanesque sculptors, who mark a beginning rather than an accomplishment.

As a reflective and conscientious artist, Buffet rounded out his studies in museums with studies in the library of the *Beaux-Arts*, which delighted him as much as his teachers disappointed him. “This library is a treasure,” he has said, “the most astonishing in the world for art and painting.” Library work, solitary and silent, was ready-made to please Buffet. He was never more at ease than when “away from adults.”

If Buffet’s teachers at the *Beaux-Arts* were powerless to teach him what he expected of them (“often they don’t know how to draw,” he says), they were able at any rate to recognize his genius. The fact is surprising, but it is undeniable. Buffet exhibited at the Salon for Under-Thirty-Year-Olds, then at the Salon of the Independents. He sold several canvases at prices ranging from ten to twenty thousand francs. The art dealer David offered him a contract. As a starter he bought ten of his paintings, for which he paid a total of fifteen thousand francs. After that, David advanced Buffet a monthly allowance of forty thousand francs (about \$115). Today these sums seem ludicrous. But Buffet was unknown and penniless. This pittance represented a fortune.

In ten years Buffet has painted fifteen hundred canvases. Each of his paintings is now worth between one and two million francs, which makes a total of about two billion. This spring the Galerie Charpentier put on a retrospective show of one hundred Buffet paintings — an unheard-of event for a painter of his age. The day of the opening,

eight thousand people, each of whom had paid one thousand francs to get in (or the equivalent of three movie tickets), trod all over one another in the elegant salons of the great Faubourg Saint-Honoré gallery. Squads of policemen had to be mobilized to unravel the worst traffic jam seen in this quarter for years, even though the Elysée Palace, the residence of the President of the French Republic, is just across the street. A month later the entrance fee was down to three hundred francs, and the crowds were still queuing up on the Faubourg Saint-Honoré. An American friend I took there one Wednesday was dumfounded by the sight and remarked: "It's only in Paris one sees things like this."

Buffet has become one of the glories of France. Hardly a day passes without the papers speaking of him. His opinion is sought on every subject, from the collection unveiled by Dior's successor to the war in Algeria. This year he has been asked to participate in the Cannes film festival. He owns a ducal château in which, clothed in torn overalls, he paints twelve hours a day. He has a Rolls-Royce for short outings, a chauffeur to drive it, and a couple of butlers to people his castle. All this, of course, enrages the bourgeois who refuse to admit that an artist can have talent unless he is starving in a garret.

It is admirable that, in the midst of the tired and vapid painting of his time in which, almost always, theories have replaced practice and doctrines inspiration, Buffet has appeared as a primitive, at once knowing and naïve, nourished on old traditions and totally impervious to any kind of intellectualism. He holds an average of one exhibition a year and — this is something that has not been seen since the great painters of the past — he devotes it entirely to one subject: the horrors of war, Paris, the circus, or the life of Joan of Arc.

He is afraid of nothing. In our century of tiny apartments where, it was said, only easel paintings stood a chance of selling, he covers canvases as vast as Veronese's. These canvases are full of human beings, trees, houses, objects, grouped according to the most tried and tested rules of composition. They contain no secret symbolism. They are content to describe the world as an intellect can reveal it and a hand can express it. Like the great painters of old, Buffet naïvely inscribes a title at the bottom of his paintings: *The Coronation of Charles VII at Rheims* or *Descent from the Cross*. This is a change, it must be said, from those thousands of smeared messes which we have been offered in contemplation for the last

thirty years and for which the authors would be hard put to it to find any title other than *Painting*.

It is refreshing to hear Buffet talk about his art: it is a member of the French Institute of 1750 or 1820 who speaks and who expresses himself in the most reasonable, sensible, and least romantic language. This intrepid painter, who dishes out the fiercest reds and blues of modern painting in trowelfuls and who edges in his faces with lines as black as Hell, is a timid boy who defends himself with bashful smiles. But sometimes he manages to emerge from his reserve.

"By what standards do you judge painters and their works?" a journalist once asked him.

"By the drawing and composition," Buffet replied. "Does a painter know how to draw a hand or a foot? No? Then let him start learning. I refuse to confuse decorators and makers of bathroom mosaics with painters. The quality of a work lies first of all in its power of recognition. Real courage for a painter is not to surprise, but to communicate. Reference to the subject is the only way of judging talent, skill, and art. A painter who does not know how to draw a foot, a hand, a face has nothing to do with painting. If I paint boats on the sea, I want them to float."

Buffet's ideas on abstract art reflect the same triumphant common sense. "This kind of painting," he says, "is based solely on relationships of colors. It turns its back on form. Something in it is missing. I feel that abstract art is a dead end. An effort was made to pass it off as the highest form of intellectual evolution. This is paradoxical, for tired intellectuals actually invented this haughty form. Abstraction is above all a return to infancy, a game played among initiates incapable of carrying the weight of real discipline."

"True abstraction," says Buffet, "is in Rembrandt and Courbet. It is the power to signify more strongly than by exact representation; it is a certain quality which, from the picture of a beaten ox or a nude woman, conjures up a feeling surpassing not only the picture, the idea, but also the emotion that would be aroused by a real bull or a real woman."

Among Buffet's declarations I shall quote just one more, which is moving because of its evident sincerity: "I have known success. It has sometimes been thought exaggerated. The mistake made is in imagining that I have, even once, in order to obtain it, consented to betray the truth such as I feel and conceive it."

It seems to me that this is the tone of a dedicated painter of inflexible honesty. The sole misfortune of Buffet, otherwise so fortunate, was to be born in a period of artistic decline. When he began painting, Bonnard was dead, Vuillard was

dead, and his own genius was far too strong to be influenced by the delicate hands which remained.

In saying this, I make no exception for Picasso, that Gargantua of modern art. Picasso essentially is Voltaire turned painter; that is to say, a prolific, clever artist, knowing every trick of his trade. Voltaire wrote more than any other Frenchman: Picasso has painted more than any man in the world. Like Voltaire, Picasso is of staggering intelligence, he has ranged over every field of creation, his taste is exquisite and his art accomplished. But, like Voltaire, he has no heart and he is no poet, though he sincerely believes (and makes people believe) that he is. Picasso, in fact, will go down in history not as a finished painter like Rembrandt, Rubens, or even Cézanne, but as a journalist of painting. His work in sixty years constitutes a curious art sale catalogue. Goya, Gainsborough, Ingres, Manet, Toulouse-Lautrec, Cézanne, Renoir, and so on parade before us. Now and then we come on an unusual canvas which resembles nothing: here Picasso is at last himself. But this painter is inferior to the others. Picasso has been imitated by no one because he has imitated everybody.

Buffet, furthermore, was initiated into painting at a time when Picasso, tired of imitating others, had taken to imitating and repeating himself. In the last few years several films of Picasso have been made. Those I have seen are devastating. They show us the great man reduced to facile puttering. The pyrotechnical creator of the first Cubist paintings, the charming artist of the blue period, the painter of cow-eyed Junos is here seen amusing himself making pottery for luxury shops, covering blank walls with childish drawings, and fashioning extravagant objects. Has Picasso perhaps reached the same point as Matisse, who painted such bad pictures in the last fifteen years of his life? The second-rate stuff which is exhibited at the Museum of Antibes and which represents, it seems, *The Creation of the World*, would lead one to fear it.

For a painter of Buffet's intensely serious and tragic cast of mind, Picasso could offer little even if he had maintained a workshop for apprentices. Buffet thus lacked a master. He knows it better than anyone. One thinks of what he might have become had he been privileged, like El Greco, to be the pupil of Tintoretto. Instead of being a great classic painter, he will doubtless be no more than a great primitive. Like Cimabue, he must rediscover everything. But perhaps it has fallen to his lot to inaugurate a new phase in the history of painting. At the level of growth and achievement he has now reached, one can only hope that when he too becomes an old master, he may find a disciple as richly endowed as himself.

JULES SUPERVIELLE

CE PEU D'OCEAN

*Ce peu d'océan, arrivant de loin,
Mais c'est moi, c'est moi qui suis de ce monde,
Ce navire errant, rempli de marins,
Mais c'est moi, glissant sur le mappemonde,
Ce bleu oublié, cette ardeur connue,
Et ce chuchotis au bord de la nue,
Mais c'est moi, c'est moi qui commence ici,
Ce cœur de silence étouffant ses cris,
Ces ailes d'oiseaux près d'oiseaux sans ailes
Volant, malgré tout, comme à tire d'ailes,
Mais c'est moi, c'est moi dans l'humain souci.
Courage partout; il faut vivre encore
Sous un ciel qui n'a plus mémoire de l'aurore!*

THIS PART OF OCEAN

This part of ocean, this far-traveled swell
Am I; yes, I belong to this world,
I am the sailors, and their vagrant hull
Am I. Yes, I glide over the world.
This blue forgotten, this heat long-known,
This murmur at the edge of the sky —
Yes, it's I, it's I who am here begun;
This heart of silence that chokes its cry,
These wings of birds past birds of no wings
Flying nonetheless with the might of wings —
Within human concern, then, such am I.
Courage to all! We still have to live on
Though the sky over us forget its dawn.

Translated by E. S. YNTEMA

THE FRENCH ECONOMY

A Study in Paradoxes

BY RAYMOND ARON

RAYMOND ARON is the author of a dozen books on sociological, historical, and political topics, and writes regularly for FIGARO. The article which follows is adapted from his latest book, *ESPOIR ET PEUR DU SIÈCLE*, part of which Doubleday will be publishing in English later in the year.

ALL nations feel superior to others in certain respects, but they can easily be beset by doubts, anxieties, and even inferiority complexes. France, to judge by her press and by the discussions in the market place, oscillates between vanity and a sense of humiliation, being as ready to accuse foreigners of barbarism as to admit Germany's irresistible superiority in everything but the *art de vivre* — which is to say, in essentials.

Not long ago I reread *La France Nouvelle* of Prévost-Paradol, a book written by a Libéral on the eve of the Franco-Prussian War and in the presentiment of defeat. "When the present head of our country," wrote Prévost-Paradol, referring to Napoleon III, "said that a country's rank depends on the number of men it can place under arms, he did nothing but give a too absolute expression to a correct idea, for one must take into account the relative quality of men as well as their numbers. Xerxes, for example, placed many more men under arms than Greece, and yet the great soul of Greece vanquished him. But when it is a question of equally civilized nations and of courageous citizens, equally imbued with feelings of honor, this maxim becomes rigorously true, and it is to the most populous nation that military and political ascendancy inevitably belong with all the material and moral advantages accruing from them."

Prévost-Paradol was here forecasting what a century later every Frenchman learns at school: France lost her position in Europe first and fore-

most because her population throughout the nineteenth century increased less than that of her neighbors and rivals. True, the post-war rise in the French birth rate has rekindled hopes which would have seemed Utopian twenty years ago. But the French economic revival today appears relatively insignificant when compared to that of small countries like Sweden or Switzerland or to this century's giant, the United States.

The French were disillusioned with the economic condition of their country the day they abandoned the fiction of a healthy equilibrium. As long as the maintenance of a certain just proportion between industry and agriculture, town and country, large and small business seemed to obey an unwritten law of French collective life and the requirements of order and measure, we were content to sit back and contemplate, without a sense of bitterness or inferiority, the steady growth of English or American cities, the preference given by the peoples of the West to industrial work, the multiplication of huge factories. That so many traditional forms still survived in France, that our small enterprises continued to function on a personal scale, and that we were blessed with millions of peasants, masters by divine right of their own land — these facts all seemed proof of wisdom; we avoided the ravages of crises, massive unemployment, the grim lot of the work slaves of the suburbs.

But as soon as the now hackneyed theory of

economic growth was applied to France, these illusions were shattered. As soon as it was realized that the relative importance of industry and of trade, transport, and services depends not on the genius of nations but on the maturity of their economy, France was found to be more backward than Sweden or Switzerland; indeed, she seemed almost as backward as China and India (whose civilizations in the past had been second to none).

This criticism or self-criticism of the French economy still haunts books, reports, articles, and lectures. It can be found in the publications of the Economic Commission for Europe, and in the periodic reports of the Commission du Bilan National. Herbert Luethy has translated it into German, while Jean-Paul Sarrre has adopted it in order to interpret, in a pseudo-Marxist manner, the hesitations of the proletarian revolt. Let us briefly examine its principal points.

In 1900 the percentage of industrial manpower, relative to the number of persons between 15 and 59 years of age (25 per cent), was higher in France than it was in Germany, Holland, Denmark, Norway, or Sweden. But for the next half century it failed to rise, and today the figure is lower than that of all the other countries of Western Europe with the exception of Holland. Similarly, the percentage of those employed in agriculture, relative to the male population aged from 15 to 59, is higher in France than for all the other countries of Western Europe, higher even than for Denmark and Holland, both of which are exporters of agricultural products. (It was 48 per cent in 1900 and 32 per cent in 1950.) If the distribution of manpower over the three economic sectors (mining, agriculture, and fishing; manufacture; trade and transport) is one of the most accurate criteria of the stage reached by a modern society, then the conclusion is undeniable: a century ago, when Prévost-Paradol was writing, France was still the most highly industrialized country on the continent; today she leads Southern Europe but trails behind Northern Europe.

The active male population employed in French agriculture fell from 5.6 million in 1901 to 3.3 million in 1954. What was denounced, thirty years ago, as the "depopulation of the countryside" was not a myth. In half a century, more than 2 million Frenchmen have sought nonagricultural employment. French industry, between 1921 and 1954, only absorbed 600,000 of them, whereas trade, transport, and services took close to a million. In short, French industrial manpower has barely advanced in the last thirty years, those workers not needed in agriculture going mostly into shopkeeping, transportation, and white-collar work.

French failure to industrialize aggressively has

been accompanied by an insufficient concentration of the means of production; one might almost say by a paralysis of capital. Concentration has made but slight progress since the turn of the century. Enterprises employing more than twenty workers represented 4 per cent of the total in 1906 and 8.5 per cent in 1950. Enterprises employing more than ten represented 7 per cent of the total in 1906 and 15 per cent in 1950.

Likewise the disparity in the size of our agricultural units has been a classic theme for instructive reflection and morose meditation: 40 per cent of French farms, or one million, were calculated in 1950 to have a gross income of less than 300,000 francs (about 860 dollars). An economy hovering somewhere between the Middle Ages and the twentieth century: such is the pessimistic image which the French have substituted in their national consciousness for the idea of a harmonious balance.

The diversity of small businesses and the wide range in their efficiency have constituted the main element in French self-criticism, as it has been developed by public officials and economics professors. Other favorite targets have been the state's subsidization of surplus products (wine, for example) and the billions of francs spent every year maintaining the alcohol monopoly, which afford an ideal opportunity for denouncing conservative *dirigisme* or the indecent activity of pressure groups. The high cost of construction and the dispersion of building workers over tens of thousands of small enterprises also illustrate the statistics of feeble productivity.

These criticisms of the French economy usually take on a political coloration. Left-wing critics emphasize that French businessmen are irresponsible, authoritarian, enslaved by bourgeois traditions, indifferent to questions of productivity, anxious to obtain the protection of the state. Right-wing commentators single out the evils of inflation, the disorder of public finances, the sudden introduction of the forty-hour week, the incoherent intervention of the state. Each side denounces the "Malthusianism" of the other.

In times past, the French used to pride themselves on their wisdom in maintaining a balance between industry and agriculture. But today, we are naturally dismayed because our badly equipped farms, our grimy little shops, and our unproductive artisans have not disappeared.

How do the French themselves explain the survival of so many inefficient enterprises? How do they account for the fact that manpower employed in manufacturing industries has not multiplied as

fast as that employed in shopkeeping, transport, and white-collar work?

A geographical explanation has been put forward by the French historian, Charles Morazé. Nature, which favored France in the past, has handicapped her in an age of technical civilization. France was a rich country as long as wealth was linked to the land, as long as multiple-crop farming was rational, as long as the diversity of her soils and climates could assure both abundance and differentiation. But in an age when the scientific cultivation of cereals can provide at one and the same time for the feeding of the population, the reduction of agricultural manpower, and the use of those thus freed for more productive employment, then France is poor in relation to more highly industrialized countries.

Morazé emphasizes two other particular difficulties which industrialization in France has run into. The mountainous nature of the Massif Central proved an obstacle when the French railway network was laid down in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the location of industry altered more radically in France than in any other country in Europe. The coal deposits of the Massif Central disappointed the hopes of the prospectors, with the result that the small-scale industries of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which made France the foremost industrial country on the continent in 1850, constituted a brake on later developments.

This explanation dissipates the legend, still widely spread abroad, of "the natural wealth of France." The coal deposits of the Ruhr or of Wales represented in the last century a more authentic source of wealth — or, let us say, a greater incentive to the creation of new wealth — than the sun of the Côte d'Azur, the rolling hills of Burgundy, or even the plains of the Brie or the Beauce. France was short of coal during the century in which this was an indispensable condition for heavy industry, and the diversity of her provinces and agriculture offered her strong reasons for not specializing.

An explanation of greater currency today is the demographic theory which Alfred Sauvy, in particular, has elaborated and confirmed with examples and analyses. The non-increase of a country's population, according to this theory, should permit curtailment of what can be called "demographic investments" — that is to say, the extra funds needed to train a growing number of young men. The pre-war stagnation in the French birth rate acted as a brake to industrial expansion for mechanical and psychological reasons.

Economic progress presupposes rapid modifications in the relative importance of different sec-

tors of the economy. Now transfers of labor from one sector to another are above all effected through the opening up of new jobs on the labor market. Instead of taking the place of the retiring older worker, the young worker heads for those industries which are expanding. It is far more difficult to get mature workers to give up jobs they are used to in order to take up new and unfamiliar ones in a different trade. With a rising birth rate, the increase in the number of workers tends to increase labor mobility, whereas a static or shrinking population tends to reduce it.

At the same time it is precisely a stagnant population which most needs a high mobility of labor. When the home market is expanding, thanks to the arrival of new consumers, the relative positions of various industries can be modified without any of them having to contract. But when the number of consumers is not rising and the home market can only benefit from a rise in the living standard, the growth of certain industries must be paid for by the contraction of others.

The feeble rate of industrialization, combined with a strong propensity to save (itself determined by both the distribution of income and the spontaneous inclinations of the French), created a surplus of capital, which for the most part was invested abroad. (French investments in foreign countries amounted to some 40 billion Napoleonic francs on the eve of World War I.) It would have been more in the national interest to invest within France herself — in her industry or agriculture — the francs that went into building Russian railways or the port of Gdynia in Poland.

The effect of demographic stagnation is, above all, psychological. Why increase the size of one's business if there are only one or two sons to take over the succession? The absence of young people engenders a fear of excessive production and of inadequate outlets. One lives under the tyranny of the present, viewing the future at best as a matter of holding on to what already is, whereas the law of modern economic life is growth.

IN THE course of this century the French state has retarded economic expansion both by what it has done and by what it has omitted doing, thanks to the false notions or ignorance of those who were governing the country. If constant causes, such as geography, the stagnation of the population, the psychology of managers and workers, had been entirely responsible for the economic slump, then they should have operated as much from 1920 to 1930 as from 1930 to 1940. Instead, the national income index dropped in 1937–1938 to 86 (assuming 1928–1929 equals 100). Economic growth in

Europe was slow between the wars, but it was regular. Nothing need have prevented the French economy, such as it was, with its strengths and weaknesses, from continuing its development. The crisis, which struck all the countries of Europe, was prolonged, aggravated by major mistakes of policy and above all by the refusal of all French governments, whether of the Right or of the Left, to devalue between 1933 and 1936. When the barriers were finally swept away, the forty-hour week was introduced, as though such a measure could help to absorb an unemployment which was not widespread anyway.

There is additional evidence that the economic policies of the state have been at fault. Economic progress normally involves an increase in the share of wages and salaries in the national income and a reduction in the share of mixed incomes. Such was the case in France at the end of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The share of mixed revenues — that is, of producers who are both employers and employed, single or family enterprises — fell from 53 per cent in 1788 to 28 per cent in 1890, while the share of wages rose over the same period from 16 per cent to 52 per cent. At the same time that of capital declined from 31 per cent to 18 per cent. But in 1952 the proportion of mixed revenues rose again to 32 per cent, that of wages declined to 49 per cent, and that of social transfers (social security, health insurance, family allocations, pensions, and so forth) rose to 14.3 per cent. As for the share of capital, it had shrunk to a level of 4.9 per cent. These changes are not explained by the spontaneous movements of the economy; they are due to the intervention of the state.

The state enacted legislation which reoriented an important fraction of wages and salaries through the coffers of the social insurance system. The inflation which has persisted almost ceaselessly since 1914 provoked the collapse of stock-market holdings and gave a new lease on life to mixed revenue producers, like small entrepreneurs, artisans, and shopkeepers. The French tax system has not been neutral; it has not tended to place big and small on the same level where the fittest naturally survive; it has aided the small and has shielded them from the rigors of natural selection.

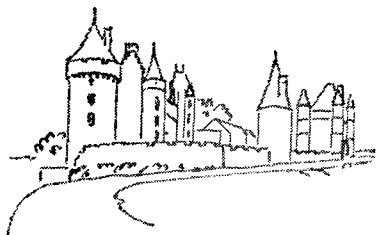
State policy, however, is not a final cause, and it requires explanation as much as it provides one. On the one hand, the state's conservative direction — tariff protection, subsidies for unsalable products, benefits for inefficient producers — attests its own weakness and the influence of private corporations; on the other hand, it also expresses a widespread state of mind. Let us once again take the example of the crisis of 1929. Why were the successive French governments of both the Right

and Left, incapable of taking the relatively simple measures which would have put an end to this absurdly ruinous crisis? The governments of other countries also committed errors and prolonged the Depression. But in France the errors committed went from one extreme to the other, with the country settling down to a regular state of subproduction. Was this due to the economic ignorance of French leaders? Without a doubt. Was it due to a rebirth of a latent peasant and craftsman's mistrust toward the cities, industry, and capitalism? Without a doubt, also. German or American unemployment seemed to justify the skepticism which the French of the provinces had always felt toward the indefinite expansion of production and purchasing power, the miracles of science and technology. Until very recently the French did not possess a system of education, nor a scale of values, in keeping with the needs of industrial civilization.

Even so the French have played an important part in the development of new industries, automobiles, and airplanes. They have not turned their backs categorically on technical civilization. What has been particularly marked in France has been the fact that new industries have risen up alongside of the old.

Since 1945, in spite of inflation, strikes, and an apparent disorder, France has been in a period of renovation. Since 1953 the rate of expansion has been normal; that is, it has matched the growth of economically advanced countries. It has been of the order of 5 to 6 per cent for the national product, 10 per cent for industry. Never have the French talked so much about stagnation as they have since their economy began to expand.

In such conditions the turbulence of the next few years is inevitable. The immediate difficulties — the standard of living, the value of the franc, the problems posed by the transformation of existing economic structures, agricultural surpluses, the modernization of backward sectors and regions, and the repercussions of the events of North Africa — will all combine in unpredictable fashion in the French parliament and in the country. The regime will be, or will appear to be, menaced; men, parties, classes will exchange invectives and brandish ideologies in the familiar style of French tumult. But if the transformation of North Africa into independent states can despite everything be accomplished, without irreparable damage being done on one or the other side of the Mediterranean — then the internal uproar, the cries of the Poujadistes and their successors, the vain Stalinism of a fossilized Communist Party, and the bitterness provoked by the loss of the Empire will not keep France from advancing, in her own peculiar way, along the common road of the peoples of the old continent of Europe.



TOURIST CALENDAR

MUSICAL AND THEATRICAL FESTIVALS

- STRASBOURG** June 9-24. Annual International Music Festival. The oldest French festival.
- NANCY** June 9-29. Eighteenth-century Festival.
- CHARTRES** May 17-July 26. Musical Saturdays. Weekend chamber music concerts.
- VICHY** June 14-July 6. Eighth Music and Drama Festival, featuring performances by Jean Vilar's Théâtre National Populaire (June 15) and ballets by Russian Bolshoi troupe (June 21-22).
- PRADES** July 3-21. Annual Chamber Music Festival, under the direction of Pablo Casals. Guest performers include Menuhin, Engel, Cortot, Kempff, Vegh, Horszowski.
- CARCASSONNE** July 10-20. Dramatic Art Festival under Jean Deschamps. Performances at open-air theater, and floodlighting of the city.
- AIX-EN-PROVENCE** July 10-31. Annual Music Festival will feature the Paris Conservatory Orchestra:
- Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, July 10, 17, 23, 29
Mozart's *Magic Flute*, July 15, 19, 24, 27
Rossini's *Barber of Seville*, July 21, 26, 30
- The festival will feature many concerts, with guest soloists Wilhelm Kempff, Andrés Segovia, the famous Italian twelve-instrument group I Musici, the Paris Conservatory Choir, the young composer Pierre Boulez.
- AVIGNON** July 15-August 3. Annual Drama Festival put on by Jean Vilar's Théâtre National Populaire in the court of the Palace of the Popes.
- PARIS** The International Drama Festival will feature the following programs at the Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt in Paris:
- | | |
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| <p>June 1 Troupe du Théâtre Marocain</p> <p>2</p> <p>4-7 Stuttgart Opera</p> <p>9-12 Theater of Buenos Aires</p> <p>13-14 Royal Stockholm Theater</p> <p>15</p> <p>18-20 Moscow Art Theater</p> <p>21-23</p> <p>25-27</p> <p>28-29</p> <p>30</p> <p>July 2-3 Zurich Schauspielhaus</p> <p>4-5 National Dancers of Ceylon</p> <p>7-10 Old Vic Theatre (London)</p> <p>11-13</p> <p>15-16 People's Theater of Poland</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> | <p>Molière's <i>Le Malade Imaginaire</i></p> <p>A Moroccan play</p> <p>Werner Egk's <i>Le Revizor</i></p> <p>Mérimée's <i>Le Carrosse du St.-Sacrement</i></p> <p>and Alberto de Zavalía's <i>El Limite</i></p> <p>Strindberg's <i>The Creditors</i></p> <p>Ibsen's <i>Wild Duck</i></p> <p>Chekhov's <i>Cherry Orchard</i></p> <p><i>Three Sisters</i></p> <p><i>Uncle Vanya</i></p> <p>Rakhmanov's <i>Troubled Old Age</i></p> <p>Chekhov's <i>Cherry Orchard</i></p> <p>Max Frisch's <i>Biedermann und Hotz</i></p> <p>Ballets</p> <p><i>Henry VIII</i> (with John Gielgud)</p> <p><i>Hamlet</i> (with John Neville)</p> <p>Gozzi's <i>Turandot</i></p> <p>Werfel's <i>Jacobowsky and the Colonel</i></p> <p>New Polish work (as yet unspecified)</p> |
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FRANCE SUMMER 1958

ANNECY August 3-10. Theater performances, folklore events, and canal concerts in this charming old town on the edge of one of France's loveliest lakes.

MENTON August 1-13. Chamber music concerts given in the square in front of the baroque façade of the Church of Saint Michel, overlooking the Mediterranean. Concerts are accompanied by night flower battles, carnival processions, and nautical events in the gay Riviera tradition.

LIGHT AND SOUND PROGRAMS

From the beginning of June, almost all important Loire châteaux (Amboise, Angers, Azay-le-Rideau, Blois, Chambord, Chenonceaux, Loches, Sully-sur-Loire, and Villandry) will have nightly *son et lumière* programs beginning at 9 P.M. In the vicinity of Paris, Grosbois and Chantilly will feature nightly programs.

VERSAILLES Program entitled "To All the Glories of France" prepared with the help of André Maurois and Jean Cocteau. June 20-September 28 (except for June 22, July 6, August 3, and September 7) on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. June 24-August 26 on Tuesdays as well. On the terrace of the château; 10:00 P.M. up to August 14, 9:30 P.M. beginning August 15.

Night festivals on Sundays, June 22, July 6, August 3, and September 7, beginning at nightfall. Includes playing of Neptune fountains and fireworks.

Fountain displays in the park on Sundays, June 1, 15, and 22; July 6 and 20; August 3 and 17; September 7 and 21; 4:45 P.M.

VINCENNES Night spectacle entitled "A Thousand Years of the History of France" in the old royal fortress on the eastern edge of Paris. Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays on the esplanade of the château: June 1-July 14, 10:30 P.M. July 16-August 14, 10:00 P.M. August 15-September 28, 9:30 P.M.

MISCELLANEOUS

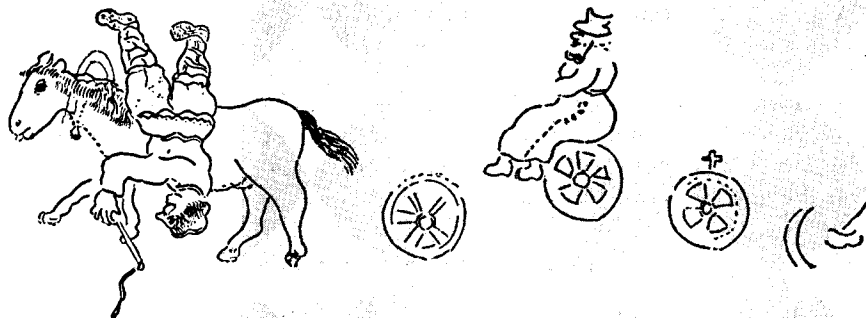
PARIS AND VICINITY June 8 Prix de Diane (horse race) at Chantilly, 2:00 P.M.
 June 11, 12, 13 Celebration of fourteenth centenary of Abbey of Saint Germain des Prés.
 June 21 Grand Steeplechase de Paris, at Auteuil, 2:00 P.M.
 June 21 Grand Prix de Paris (horse race) at Longchamp, 2:00 P.M.
 July 10-October 10 Exhibition of Lurçat paintings and tapestries at Musée de l'Art Moderne.

BRITTANY *Breton Pardons*: religious festivals celebrated with colorful Breton costumes in honor of Saint Anne, the patron saint of Brittany.
 July 13 Locronan (Finistère). Pardon of the *Troménie*.
 July 26 Auray (Morbihan). Pardon of Saint Anne.
 August 23-24 La Palud (Finistère). Pardon of Saint Anne.
 August 24 Concarneau (Finistère). Festival of the Blue Fishing Nets held for the benefit of sailors' welfare fund, with display of fishing nets of safely returned fishermen. Accompanied by gay regional dances.

Travelers will be interested in the illustrated booklet, TOURIST EVENTS: FRANCE, 1958. For a free copy write to the Publisher of the ATLANTIC, 8 Arlington Street, Boston 16, Massachusetts.

COLOR AS LOVE

A Portrait of Chagall



BY CARLTON LAKE

CARLTON LAKE is the Paris art critic for the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, and since 1952 he has made his headquarters in a venerable Louis XIII house on the Ile St. Louis. When Marc Chagall returned this spring from his visit to the United States, Mr. Lake called on him at his home in Paris. The following article is the result.

CHAGALL is back in Paris — late, but back, finally — after his trip to America, and I am eager for a look at him. Not that he will have changed, but I want to chide him for missing his boat and our rendezvous with spring and the chestnut buds on our island. Too, I want to find out how America looked to him after an absence of ten years. Mostly, though, I just want to see Chagall. *Ça fait du bien.*

I walk out of my house, through the portecochere, onto the *quai*, turn left, pass the old cabaret where Charlotte Corday (according to a badly garbled island legend) picked up the knife with which she punctured Marat's left lung, and stop in front of the massive studded door that leads to the courtyard of Chagall's house.

Chagall's concierge, more or less sober, sprawls in a chair just outside the entrance, the point from which he surveys daily the traffic along the Seine and soothes himself with dreams of his years in the merchant marine. He is chewing at his straggly mustache and scratching rhythmically at something underneath his shirt — a sure sign of spring. I step into the courtyard.

"He's not there," he calls out over his shoulder as I pass. Standard procedure.

"*Bien sûr*," I tell him, "but I'll wait." I hear him mutter something involving the word *foutre* as I cross the cobblestones. I climb the grand stairway and ring Chagall's bell. Madame Chagall opens the door. She has a softly dark, glowing Oriental beauty in her face and manner. Inside the apartment, a few suitcases stand open, half unpacked. She apologizes for a disorder which is hardly apparent, and we pass through the hallway into the high, white, sparsely furnished salon. Chagall is writing at a long refectory table that stretches between the room's two full-length windows. Flowers are everywhere, but the walls are bare except for two posters announcing exhibitions of his work in Paris and in Nice.

As we enter, Chagall jumps up and comes over to greet me. I think of Joseph Delteil's observation: "Chagall appears and day breaks." Chagall is thirty years older than he was when Delteil made the comparison, but it still holds. He has the lithe, springy step of radiant good health, and if his curls are a bit thinner and grayer now than they were when Delteil knew him, I'm sure his eye was not bluer nor his smile warmer then. Still, he doesn't have quite the same bounce he had the day I bade him good-by in February.

"I'm tired," he says. "Come sit down." He eases back into a corner of a dark blue divan which is opposite his worktable, stretches his legs out onto the Persian runner in front of him, and yawns. "It's terrible," he says. "Americans are wonderful people — so goodhearted — but, my God, the parties, the receptions, the questions, the handshakes! I guess I met all my old friends — and at least five hundred new ones — but I'd be hard put to tell you all their names.

"In Chicago, at the University, the Committee on Social Thought had me take part in three round-table discussions on 'Art and Life.' I talk, then everybody asks questions, and I answer them. Or try to. They'd like to *épingler* you, just like a butterfly" — Chagall's right arm lunges over at me as though I were *his* butterfly — "but I didn't let them. I wanted them to think about what I said, worry about it a little afterwards, maybe, but not to spell it out for them. I hope they got something from it all."

I told him I felt sure they got a good deal, in one way or another, from him; did he feel he got something from them, from America as a whole?

He sat up straight. "What do you think I am, a stick of wood? Of course I got much from America. I always did. It's not up to me to say what or how. You know my work; you can tell me about that better than I can tell you. To me, America has always seemed a country of great lyricism, surging with a kind of spontaneous poetry. You feel it everywhere, welling up from under the surface. Does it show up in the work I did in America in the forties? You know better than I. All I know is that when I was there — when I went to Mexico to work on the ballet *Aleko*, for example — I sensed it very strongly, and I think the work I did then reflected it. Also, maybe, what I did for *The Firebird*, in New York. That lyricism, I mean."

I said I agreed, but that I didn't feel that lyricism anywhere else in his work more strongly than in the etchings he made, at Ambroise Vollard's request, for the Bible, which Tériade has recently published here nearly twenty years after Chagall completed them. But that question of place interested me very much and I wanted to explore it a bit further with him.

His first great illustrated book — Gogol's *Dead Souls* — is twice a masterpiece: Chagall's plates are as great as Gogol's story. But they are specifically Russian, just as his autobiographical album *Mein Leben*, which Cassirer published in Berlin in 1923, is specifically the reflection of his Byelorussian birthplace, Vitebsk. The advance toward universality is enormous in the plates he made, between 1927 and 1930, for the *Fables* of La Fontaine, I told him.

"That's what France did for me," he interrupted me to say.

"When you got to the Bible, then, what was it that made that so much greater, even, than your interpretation of the *Fables*? Was it still France? Was it the two trips you made to Palestine?"

"Ah. Ah." Chagall threw his head back and opened his eyes and his mouth wide — a characteristic *geste* with him when ideas begin to bubble. "Not really, no. It's more a matter of time and growth; metaphysical distance, you might say. That's more important than place. But most of all, it's the book. It's the book. The Bible has always gone very deep with me. My work is full of it; you know that. Not symbolically, the way many people seem to think. I don't believe in symbolism. But it's the most moving poetry in all recorded literature. For me it's not a religious book, in the sense that most people conceive of religion. I'm not orthodox. I don't believe in any organized religious form or activity, in a synagogue or anywhere else. I don't say prayers or what pass for prayers with most people. But the poetry of the Bible is deeply moving, and I've always been greatly affected by it. I call it divine poetry and let it go at that. It's inside me, and when I paint, it comes out. You remember that poem Cendrars wrote about me? What's the name of that book — something *élastique*?"

"*Dix-neuf poèmes élastiques*," I prompted him.

"That's right. That's right." Chagall ran over to the bookshelves behind us, came back with a book, and opened up to Cendrars' poem "Portrait" — *his* portrait:

Suddenly, he paints
He takes a church and paints with a church
He takes a cow and paints with a cow
With a sardine
With heads, hands, knives
And all at once it's your portrait
It's you reader
It's me
It's him
It's his fiancée
It's the corner grocer
It's the cowherd
The midwife
Christ
He's Christ
He spent his childhood on the Cross
He kills himself every day

Chagall closed the book and tossed it onto the low table in front of the divan. "There," he said. "There you have it. It's just that way. I can't get away from it. It's as close to me as the sky. I feel I'm in the midst of it all the time. You see?"

I asked him if he had any plans for illustrating the New Testament. (The plates he has made for

the Bible are all drawn from the Old Testament.)

"Oh, I've got a long way to go before I get there. I'm still working on the Old Testament. There's that ten-foot ceramic, *The Crossing of the Red Sea*, and the sculptured bas-reliefs I made for the baptistery of the church at Assy. And you've seen my *Moses*; that's just part of a sequence I'm planning. Then there's the *Song of Songs*. I want to do something more with that. And the French government has asked me to do a twenty-foot stained-glass window for the Cathedral of Metz. I'm working on the maquette for it now. They're all parts of a whole. For me, you understand, the New Testament is simply an extension of the Old; it's not something different."

Chagall sighed. "I work those things over and over," he said. "It's the mystical element that preoccupies me constantly. The aesthetic solution isn't enough. I think the work Léger has done for the Church proves that. And Le Corbusier too. You can't be too stark or cold. You can't be brutal. You can't go against the thought of the people who come there to pray or worship. On the other hand, you have to keep it pure and keep away from orthodoxy. I had them put a little plaque on what I did for them at Assy. It reads: 'In the name of the freedom of all religions.'"

I asked Chagall if, when he works on a painting, he makes as many preparatory sketches — pen and ink, wash drawings, gouaches, and so on — as I know he did in preparing his etchings for the Bible and La Fontaine's *Fables*.

"Yes, indeed," he said. "That's why I spend so many years on these things. Take the *Fall of the Angel*, in Basel, for example. I began work on it in 1922 and only finished it in 1947. I could do ten paintings a day, like some of the others, if I wanted to. It's not that hard to paint and sign a picture. But there's more to it than that. A true work of art is a self-contained world, and the world wasn't made in a day. A woman doesn't have a baby in a day. She prepares for it slowly and waits patiently and then, when nature says it's time, she finishes her work. I'm not much of a one for 'finish' in the slick sense. I don't believe in the *joli mot* in art. I never drew a line in my life to please or amuse anybody. But I do believe things must arrive at their finish naturally and normally. Does that sound complex to you?"

Not at all, I told him. Very logical, in fact.

"Of course it's logical," he said. "I don't understand why writers have always talked about me as though I were an illogical artist creating an anti-logical universe. I'm profoundly logical. And normal."

I looked into Chagall's eyes, and I understood that what he had just said was gospel. Logic may be personal, but it must be rigorous.

"No, I've always been for logic, but against realism," he said.

"Against realism and for abstraction?" I countered.

Chagall sighed deeply and scratched his head. "*Ecoutez, mon cher*. That's very complicated. People just don't understand about abstraction. They think painters like Mondriaan are abstract. Not at all. Mondriaan just used a different brand of metaphor, that's all. I've been against realism since I began painting: first in Russia, where the 'best' painters were a kind of hybrid formed of Impressionism and Bouguereau. Then, when I came to Paris, in 1910, the struggle was still going on between the partisans of Courbet and the inheritors of the Impressionist tradition. But Impressionism itself, however much of a new departure it may have been in some respects, was, after all, just a relaxed realism with blue shadows. And what is Cubism but the architecture of realism? I fought shy of it all. I was always looking for another reality — the *real* one — but it wasn't until my return from America, in 1948, when I began to study Monet and the transparency of his pigment, that I was able to understand."

Chagall got up and began to pace back and forth along the rug. "You have to realize this," he said, stopping in front of me. "As you grow older, you become more and more preoccupied with the *matière*: pigment, color, whatever you want to call it. That's the way it was with Rembrandt. That's the way it was with Renoir. That's what happened with me. I had gradually come to realize that *color is all*. And it was Monet who made me see it. But who understands color today? Practically nobody. Five people, maybe, living today, in the whole world." He sat down again, on the edge of the divan. "Color," he said, "is two things. It is chemistry and it is love. Color as love is what so few understand. Rembrandt understood, which is why he was a great abstract painter. Mondriaan didn't; he's cold, dead. Cimabue understood, Giotto, Titian, Goya — even Courbet. But Monet best of all. In our time, at least."

"What about the rest of the Impressionists?"

"But that's the point: Monet was not an Impressionist. He's not an ism, he's an event, a phenomenon. Beside him, Pissarro is dusty, Sisley is meager, Renoir — well, Renoir sings, but after Monet, his voice is a little fragile. No, Monet had the most brilliant gift of the century, there's no doubt of it. But, as I say, few people understand the real reason why, in spite of the fact that there seems to have developed a wholesale vogue for Monet, to the point where his son has hardly a scrap of canvas, however fragmentary or tentative, left to sell."

I asked him if he saw color as love elsewhere in recent painting. "Yes, in Gauguin," he said, thoughtfully. "And then, of course, Bonnard. And there are others, too."

"And right now?"

"Who can tell? You may think your young son is very bright, but you can't say that he's a genius. It takes time and distance to know that."

I asked him how he would define color as love.

"I don't know if you'll understand it," he said, "but I'll tell you what it is. It's Mozart, it's Watteau, it's children everywhere. It's when you get down on your knees to make a declaration of love or to cry over someone very near to you who has died. Or when you pray, maybe, although I don't pray like that. It's what we need so badly in the world today, in every sphere — beginning with the political. That's color as love. But so few understand it. I've talked with many people I thought might see it, but they hardly ever do. I've talked with Matisse about it, and Braque, but they didn't see it."

"Picasso?" I asked.

"Oh." Chagall shook his head. "You can't talk with Picasso about things like that. He's not serious. He just wants to make jokes."

I ASKED him if he could tell me who are the five living today who understand color as love. He shrugged his shoulders and looked away. "Just a few poor *malheureux*. Suppose we call them 'the possessed' and let it go at that. But that's what makes great abstract painting — great like Rembrandt."

He turned back to me once again. "I have nothing against the current crop of abstractionists," he said. "I believe in full freedom for everybody, not just for myself. My only complaint is that they're wrongly labeled. They're not abstract painters; they couldn't be more figurative. Cézanne started the great revolution in art. The new abstractionists claim they're the *new* revolution. But what is it, really? Isn't it just another kind of realism, in a new dress? Naturalism, even? They're copying things we're not used to seeing copied, that's the main difference. They take a leaf and blow it up beyond all recognition, or a piece of wood" — he pointed to the graining of a new palette that lay on his table — "or the pattern of a rug, or a woman's *sexe*. They copy the cracks in walls, the graffiti in public toilets, all kinds of accidental effects, like rain water in the gutter." Chagall spat on his hand and held it out toward me. "They spit and then they study their spit under the microscope and copy carefully what they see. They copy it precisely but they magnify

it, so that you don't know what it is or where it came from. Some of them go so far as to imitate *caca* and *pipi*. That's all right with me; after all, in painting it's results that count. But it should be understood that they're imitating their subjects as slavishly as the old *pompier*s copied their nudes, with every fold of the skin and every mole in full relief. That's their business; not mine. But why not call it something like *impressionnisme réaliste*? In the end, what's the difference between the old realism and the new? It's a difference of scale, principally — often with the use of a richer, more decorative palette."

Was he thinking of anyone in particular?

"Oh, you know their names as well as I do. Besides, I have a great gift for forgetting things that don't interest me. Look at that plant over there." Chagall pointed to a rubber plant standing in front of one of the windows. "It's perfect. You can't reproduce that, because it's *authentic*, and whatever you might reproduce of it couldn't be." He pointed to the flowers — red roses and carnations, yellow tulips and daisies — that filled one corner of the room. "Why should anybody wish to violate those by reproducing them?" he asked.

He went over to a console in the opposite corner and came back with a white marble abstract sculpture mounted on a burnished black plinth. It was the work of a very recognizable contemporary hand, currently showing in New York and Paris. He held the sculpture out to me. "He gave it to me," he said, "but it's *moche* — sculpture, base, and all. It's no better than that" — he pointed to the fabric covering the divan — "or that" — a magazine cover in colors — "or that" — a candy box on the low table in front of the divan. "It's not authentic. Almost nothing is. We live in an age that promotes degradation."

He returned the sculpture to its table. "Here's beauty," he said and held out to me a piece of wax-pale chalcedony, about the size of a hen's egg. It had been broken away from a larger piece, and the exposed inner surface, smooth but irregular, gave off a soft, warm glow in the afternoon sun.

"Do you think any sculptor could do anything with that that wouldn't degrade it?" he asked. "And do you think you could reproduce it? You can't reproduce nature. You can only expose your own nature, beside God, as authentically as you know how. You listen silently and that sacred power that is within you dictates and you obey, and that is what is called creation. The point is, art doesn't set out to reproduce anything — whether a Roman gladiator or *caca* under the microscope. Two artists copy the same statues from the antique. One becomes Bouguereau; the other, Seurat."

"Should we burn down the schools, then?"

"I wouldn't go that far," he said. "I was always a bad student, myself. Wherever I went to study formally, I soon realized they were doing me more harm than good, and I had to leave. If you have a gift, you have to uncover it with care and love, the way you polish the facets of a diamond. Of course, if what you have isn't a diamond, it's hardly worth the trouble of devoting a lifetime to uncovering it. So schools do serve a purpose, perhaps.

"Here — this will interest you." He walked over to his worktable and came back with an envelope and handed it to me. It had been slit open, and it bore the superscription of the University of Glasgow. I took out the letter:

Dear Monsieur Chagall:

I am desired by the Senate of the University to invite you to receive at its hands the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws. I have much pleasure in conveying this invitation and hope to hear that you will accept it.

The Honorary Graduation ceremonies will be held on Wednesday 18 June. . . . It may be useful to say that for the occasion of the ceremony itself the University will provide each graduand with the academic dress appropriate to his degree . . .

It was signed by the Clerk of the Senate. I congratulated Chagall. He smiled slyly. "Not bad for somebody who could never get by in school, no?"

The phone rings, loud and wild. Madame Chagall answers it and calls to Chagall. He leaves me. I get up and take another look at the white sculpture. Chagall is right: it's *moche*, there's no doubt about it. They both rejoin me. Chagall looks disturbed. "It's that *sacré* ballet," he says.

"What about it?" Madame Chagall asks.

"They want to know how it's coming on, naturally. And it's not — *pour le moment*."

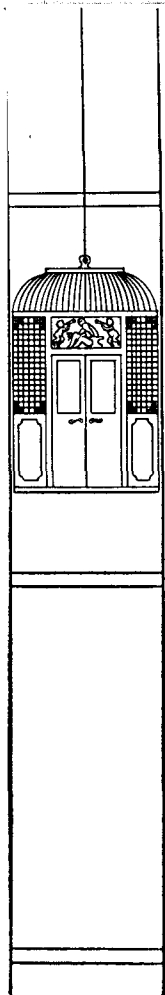
I start for the door. I know that Chagall should be working on Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé*, not talking about it. And then there is the edition of *Daphnis et Chloé* he is illustrating with color lithographs and for which he has made two trips to Greece. When are we to talk about that? Not today, certainly. I reach the door. We shake hands.

"Come back soon," Chagall says. "We'll be leaving for the Midi in a week or so."

Downstairs, the concierge is still in his chair, but no longer surveying the river traffic. His little granddaughter is playing in his lap, and he smiles and waves to me as I pass. Color as love. I begin to understand what Chagall meant.



SECOND



CIRCLE

BY MACDONALD HARRIS

A graduate of the University of Southern California, MACDONALD HARRIS is now teaching literature at the University of Utah. "Second Circle," he says, "started with my annoyance with people who think scholars live in ivory towers. A knowledge of Provençal metrics is not incompatible with ability to fix an elevator."

THAT winter it was too cold, and I had to find another hotel. I finally found one on the Rue Littré, just off the Place de Rennes. It was called the Hôtel de Londres, and it had an elevator, at least so it said on the bronze plate out in front. It was a very fine baroque plaque, with acanthus leaves and a frieze running around it, and it read:

Hôtel de Londres
Confort Moderne
Chauffage Central
Avec Ascenseur

Beauty of this kind affects my emotions, and I believed the words. The words were true. The heating was central, although it seemed to have some difficulty reaching the region of the four-hundred-franc rooms, where I lived; and there was a bathroom down the hall, if that was what was meant by Modern Comfort. As for the elevator, it was the pride of the house. In addition to the bronze plate on the sidewalk there was a sign in the vestibule repeating, as in an incantation, "Hôtel de Londres avec Ascenseur," and on the marble wall was a painted hand pointing toward it dramatically with an outstretched finger. The hand apparently wore a glove, and below it was written "Elevator" in letters of gold. Following in the direction indicated, you finally

came upon the thing itself, a bronze grille with cupids blowing trumpets and Vulcan, the god of elevators, pounding out a gear on his anvil. There was a brass button plate and an elegant door handle; the bronzework shone, the brass was polished, and on the door handle hung a sign lettered by hand in green paint: "The elevator does not march."

"Why does not the elevator march?" I inquired of Mme. Méduse, the concierge.

She was a famous pessimist, with an unlimited faith in the frailty of all mortal substance. "It is broken," she explained. "Who can say why? *Que voulez-vous?* It is the way of all flesh."

I carried my cardboard suitcase, my 1910 Oliver, and my dog-eared collection of books up the stairs, and polished the mirror over the commode until it shone like a diamond. It was a good hotel, even if the elevator did not march.

The elevator did not march all winter, and in the spring came Signor Cespuglio. I first heard of him from Mme. Méduse, who informed me that he was a libertine and a hypochondriac. Evidence: He smoked opium and he wore flannel underwear that covered him from his elbows to his knees. He was also, I found out later, an epicurean, a bibliophile, a Garibaldian, a Dante scholar, and a famous patron of zoos, and he would have been a count except that he was an ardent republican and had left Italy in disgust at the time of the March on Rome. He was somewhat smaller than normal size, with a straggling

goatee and a pair of waxed mustaches, and he wore a pair of very small steel spectacles. I met him on the landing one day and he took off his hat to me. It was a soft black felt with a short brim turned down all around, the kind of hat worn by road-show Svengalis in provincial theaters. "*Buongiorno*," I said instinctively.

"Speak French, *figlio*," he told me severely. "It is the language of reason. God in heaven, we are informed, speaks Hebrew, and the souls of the damned in hell speak Tuscan, but we here in this unhappy limbo are neither gods nor devils, and we have only our reason to guide us. As for English, which I judge from your necktie to be your native tongue, it is not a language at all; it is a disease of the larynx."

He was an incurable pedagogue, and it seemed natural to him to reply to a casual greeting with a discourse on comparative philology. His knowledge, however, was not confined solely to books. He was, among other things, an expert on the life and work of Leonardo da Vinci, whom he admired particularly for his versatility, and he strove assiduously to cultivate this virtue in himself. "Scholarship," he told me once, "is not necessarily confined to the acquisition of useless knowledge. You are a student of comparative literature. Excellent! Could you repair a cream separator? Leonardo designed one, and had it built in his own workshops. If you intend to become a scholar you could not do better than to take Leonardo for your model. He was not only a scholar, a sculptor, and a painter, but also a humanist, an archaeologist, a civil engineer, and an expert on fortifications. In addition to painting the *Mona Lisa* he invented the airplane, the automobile, the machine gun, the safety pin, and the urethral catheter. If he did not invent the elevator it was only because he saw no use for it; he was a superb athlete, and he was fond of violent exercise. Do you have a screw driver?"

"A screw driver?" I repeated, startled.

"I need it to fix the elevator," explained Signor Cespuglio.

Signor Cespuglio fixed the elevator. He went down into the cellar with the screw driver, and after half an hour there was a burring noise and the car rose, clanking, and ascended into the attic. "That marches now," Mme. Méduse cried down into the dark pit.

From that time on, the elevator worked perfectly, except that it ran in a curious and eccentric manner which it had taken for its own. Like all eccentrics, the elevator guided its conduct by a set of inflexible rules. In its case there were two chief rules, which were: 1) it stopped only going down, and 2) it started only going up. If I, for example, wanted to descend when the ele-

vator was below me, I pushed the button on my floor and after a moment I would hear the elevator below in the shaft shudder and stir into motion. The cables slithered by in the shaft, one going up and the other going down, and finally the elevator appeared. But it did not stop. (Rule 1, the elevator stops only going down.) Instead it ascended haughtily past me and mounted all the way to the attic, where it struck the ceiling with a hollow clunk. There was a metallic grinding noise as the mechanism changed gears, the cables began slithering by in the opposite direction, and the elevator descended until it stopped about six inches below my landing. I got in. The doors shut, and the elevator started upward again. (Rule 2, the elevator starts only going up.) We mounted in the shaft until we struck the ceiling again; there was an unnerving shock, the mechanism reversed, and we started downward on our final journey. The elevator was able to stop at the ground floor, due to Rule 1, and I emerged into the vestibule. Mme. Méduse was at her usual post, leaning on the counter. "That marches now?" she inquired.

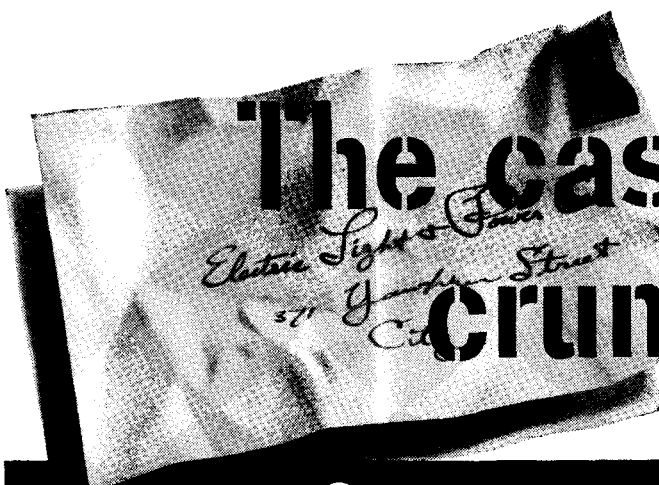
"Perfectly," I admitted.

I PONDERED over this, and found it every day more wonderful. Then I made an even more remarkable discovery: Signor Cespuglio was married.

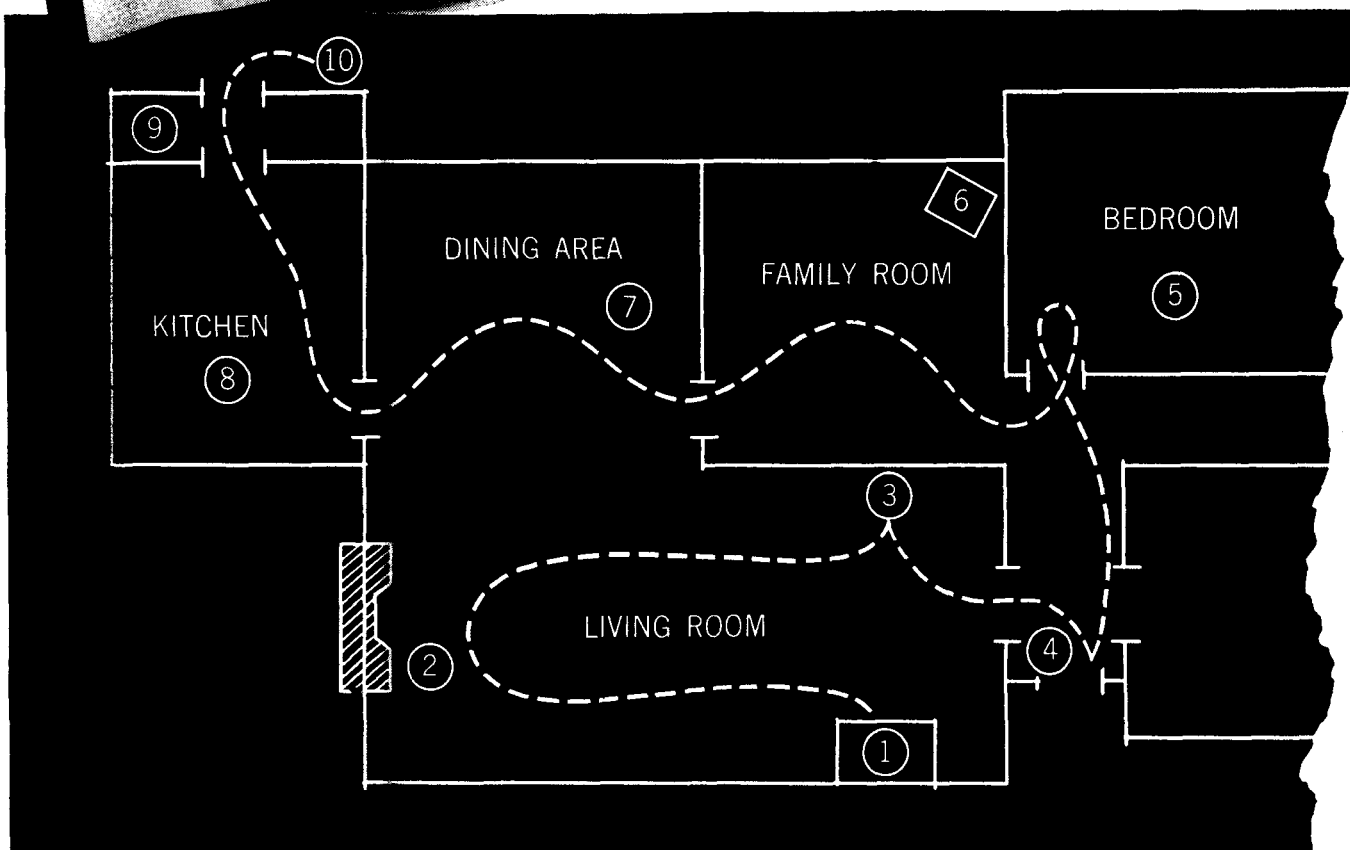
His wife had evidently kept to her room during the first few days, but after a week or so she emerged. She was young and not bad-looking: small, pale, with large dark eyes and gleaming black hair which she wore drawn up behind her head in a knot in the Spanish manner. Evidently she was bored; as you passed her in the corridor she often turned and gazed sullenly after you through half-closed lids, sucking her cheeks in the manner of Anna Magnani. In spite of this obvious gambit she did not appeal to me; I had been trained to appreciate the long-limbed and coltish type of American beauty, and she was short-legged, low-bosomed, and brooding, like a Provençal peasant. In spite of her experiments at voluptuousness there was a hard mercenary quality to her glance, as though she were appraising everything in terms of francs. It was incredible. What ludicrous senile infatuation had led Signor Cespuglio to a union with this creature? I recalled his pointed beard and his goatlike glance; a new and disquieting aspect of his character seemed to be suggested.

The days passed, and I found no solution to the mystery. Meanwhile I became Signor Cespuglio's friend. I frequently went with him to the zoo in

The case of the crumpled letter!



Scene: The Nelson home. Time: A Saturday evening



1 The desk where Mr. Nelson opened his month-end bills and wrote an indignant letter to the electric company... protesting against their advertising that electricity gives more value for every dollar than any other item in the family budget.

2 Where Mr. Nelson looked at the electric clock over the mantel to see if he had time to mail his letter before dinner.

3 The hi-fi set that he turned off as he left the living room.

4 Where Mr. Nelson paused to check the setting on the air conditioning system and see if the porch light should be turned on to guide the dinner guests.

5 His daughter's bedroom where he stopped a moment to watch her drying her hair with the electric hair dryer and admire the dress she had just ironed for her date.

6 The TV, with Junior parked in front of it watching "Masked Riders of the Range."

7 The electric coffeemaker and toaster, ready and waiting to do dinner duty.

8 The all-electric kitchen, where dinner was cooking and Mrs. Nelson was taking ice cubes from the refrigerator—and where the electric dishwasher and clotheswasher and dryer were waiting to do the clean-up chores ahead.

9 The back porch, where Mr. N. paused to think things over—realizing that his family *was* putting electricity to work in dozens of ways all over the house... ways he often forgot. So maybe the electric company was right about the value of his service.

10 The trash can into which he tossed his crumpled letter.

America's Independent Electric Light and Power Companies*

*Company names on request through this magazine

the Bois de Vincennes, where he taught me to observe the habits of animals with the perspicacious objectivity of a scientist; I learned quickly, and I applied the methods he taught me to a surreptitious study of his own character. I soon discovered that he was a very systematic person. He awoke every morning at ten and his wife served him breakfast in his room; it consisted of coffee, croissants, and his *Corriere della Sera*, which was airmailed to him every day from Milan. At eleven thirty he put on his black hat and went for a promenade, in good weather to the Bois de Vincennes, in bad weather to the antiquaries along the Left Bank. I often accompanied him on these expeditions. My studies suffered, but I acquired a considerable body of information on such subjects as the mating habits of the African date palm and the superiority of the social organizations of orangutans (polygamy, hedonism, and anarchy) to that of human beings (monogamy, puritanism, and coalition cabinets). At one we separated; I went to my lectures at the Sorbonne and he went off to the Bibliothèque Nationale. At the library he occupied himself in the Dante Collection, making copious notes in a curious shorthand which consisted entirely of little pot-hooks and was written from right to left. I did not find out until much later that this was actually the script of Leonardo's notebooks, a complicated hieroglyphic which was understood by no more than a half dozen living men. At four o'clock his serious studies were over, and he devoted the rest of the day to the lighter pleasures of mind and body. He made his way leisurely back to Montparnasse via the quays and the Boulevard Saint-Michel, stopping along the way to browse in bookstores and eventually ending up on the terrace of the Rotonde, where he drank exactly three Ricards, one after the other. I often met him there on my way home from the university, and sat down to converse with him. It was the best time of the day.

"Signor Cespuglio," I asked him one time, "do you advise a young man to marry?"

"Certainly," he told me. "One should be natural in whatever one does, and it is natural for all the beasts to go in pairs."

"There are those who also find pleasure in the state," I pointed out.

"It is always a pleasure to do what is natural," he replied. "Hedonism is naturalism, and vice versa."

I drained my second Ricard. "But in your case," I persisted recklessly. "Surely you have reached an age when —"

I stopped, perceiving that he was taking a malicious satisfaction in my discomfort. "*Figlio*, you are impudent," he said, "but in this case you

are right. I have passed the age of passions, thank God. You are a student of comparative literature. Do you know your Plato? In the first book of the *Republic*, Socrates inquires of the aged Cephalus whether he is still capable of the act of love. The old man replies that he well remembers the thing of which Socrates speaks, but that the day he was delivered of it he felt as though he had escaped from a mad and furious master. *Mot admirable*. Yet one must be natural in all things. I never married in my youth, considering myself superior to the state, and my punishment is that I must submit to it in my old age."

"And how do you find it?"

"Ecstasy is lacking," said Signor Cespuglio. And then he added, "Still, it is pleasant to have one's coffee served in the morning."

For a while neither of us said anything. It was six o'clock; the iron shutters of the shops were clanging shut along the boulevard. We paid the waiter and rose, Signor Cespuglio putting on his hat somewhat shakily with both hands, and made our way back to the hotel.

We parted on the fourth floor of the hotel. "*Arrivederci, Maestro*," I told him.

"Speak French," he reminded me severely.

SIGNOR CESPUGLIO might well congratulate himself on having passed the age of passions, but his wife had not. She was, in fact, in the furious flower of her nubility. I met her once in the office. "I am called Marie-Ange," she told me, staring at me darkly.

"Enchanted," I said, nervously taking down my key.

"My husband is Luigi Cespuglio," she continued. "He is a doctor of philosophy and a *Comendatore*, but he has no more love in his soul. He is an old man. When he eats, the juice comes from the corners of his mouth. Do you like novels?"

"Some novels," I replied cautiously.

"Come to my room sometime, and I will show you the novels of M. Paul de Kock. They are quite piquant, with illustrations. You have no idea. My husband goes to the Bibliothèque every afternoon and does not come home until six."

"Unfortunately I am a university student," I began a little stiffly, "and in the afternoon —"

But she was hardly listening. "*Mais tu es chic, le petit. Toi, comment t'appelles-tu?*"

"My name is G. David Schine," I told Marie-Ange politely. "I am grateful for your invitation, but I am a devout Catholic, and the works of Paul de Kock are all on the Index."

But this was not the end; the overtures continued until I dropped a hint to the chambermaid, who

was an intimate confidante of Marie-Ange, that I was afflicted with a loathsome disease. Then they stopped abruptly. So much, I thought, for the literary interests of Mme. Luigi Cespuglio.

"*Que voulez-vous?*" said Mme. Méduse. "Madame is young, Monsieur is old, and it is the way of all flesh. Besides, she is a Southerner, and the race is not adept at chastity." Her tone implied that they left this curious perversion to the Anglo-Saxons, who might find what pleasure in it they could.

"And so?"

"I give her a week," said Mme. Méduse.

She was too generous. That very afternoon, when I came back to the hotel about two o'clock, a young man got into the elevator with me wearing the uniform of the Paris subway system: blue cotton pants, a lopsided blue cap with his hair sticking out on one side, and a greasy blue coat with the monogram of the Metro system on the lapels. His necktie, a soiled ribbon of gray cotton, was fastened in a knot so tight it seemed impossible he would ever undo it. His coat was open, and there was a button missing near the bottom of his shirt; I could see the black hairs of his stomach through the opening. In the midst of observing this detail I noticed that he was watching me; I nodded, but he only stared, with an air of hostility mingled with a slight uneasiness. He got out of the elevator at the fourth floor with me and went straight into Mme. Cespuglio's room without knocking.

I went in my room and tried to read. But the walls were thin; it was a warm spring day, and the windows were open. Muffled voices intruded; innuendoes, titters, a noise of tussling, an overturned chair, muffled expostulations, and then — the sound of panting. I shut up my book and went downstairs.

"You were right," I told Mme. Méduse.

"*N'est-ce pas?*" she said complacently. "He is chic, don't you think? His name is Désiré, age twenty-two, a collector of tickets in the Vavin Metro station. He earns twelve thousand francs a week. I adore uniforms."

"Then you permit that sort of thing here?"

"But what?"

"Such visits."

"Monsieur," Mme. Méduse told me, "this is after all not a monastery, it is a hotel."

Studying that afternoon was impossible. I went for a walk in a vaguely troubled state which I recognized as a moral struggle, a disease from which I had previously considered myself immune. Could I remain loyal to Signor Cespuglio and not tell him what everyone else in the hotel knew? On the other hand, how to tell him? My position was a ridiculous one, and Mme. Méduse was

right; a hotel is not a monastery. There is nothing more embarrassing to youth than to be forced into a position of standing up for virtue. But virtue, I told myself, was not really involved; it was a question of the honor of Signor Cespuglio. Honor! The word had an antiquated medieval ring. It suggested to me a vague picture of Signor Cespuglio and the raffish Désiré meeting at dawn in the Bois de Boulogne, examining their weapons with grim expressions while a horse-drawn ambulance awaited at the edge of the clearing. Yet honor it was; I felt that if the public humiliation of Signor Cespuglio were allowed to continue, not only his honor but my own would be damaged. I decided to go to the Rotonde and drink several Ricards, and perhaps forget the whole thing.

At that moment, however, I glanced down the street and saw cold disaster approaching. Signor Cespuglio himself, unmistakable in his black hat and his tottering gait, had turned the corner and was making his way down the sidewalk to the hotel. It was not yet three o'clock.

It was absolutely necessary to prevent him from going to his room. I greeted him and tried to stop him, but he plunged resolutely along, and finally I was forced to join him and walk by his side. "You are not at the Bibliothèque?" I asked.

"It is the Feast of the Assumption," he explained, "and all the public buildings are closed. Naturally as a nonbeliever I cannot take such superstitions seriously, but a knowledge of Church ritual is sometimes useful. Today, for example, it saved me from taking the Metro all the way to the Bibliothèque Nationale only to find the door locked in my face. Instead I spent a pleasant two hours in the bookstalls along the river. Apropos of the Metro, may I borrow your screw driver again?"

For the moment the connection eluded me. "Is there something wrong with the elevator?"

"There will be," he told me.

THERE was nothing that would stop him. I had managed to work myself into a perfect ecstasy of apprehension as I imagined the scene about to take place; a cold film of perspiration stood on my face. But when we got out of the elevator Signor Cespuglio, instead of unlocking his door, merely applied his ear to the thin panel and straightened up with an air of satisfaction.

"Ah," he remarked. "The Black Ram."

"I beg your pardon?"

"You don't remember your Shakespeare? 'Awake! Even now, now, very now, an old black ram Is tugging your white ewe. Arise, arise!

Awake the snorting citizens with the bell, Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you.' *Othello*, Act I, Scene 1."

I was dumfounded. We had entered my room, and I offered him a seat, which he accepted with aplomb. "But surely," I protested after a moment, "you can't find the situation a pleasant one."

"On the contrary, it is all perfectly natural," he explained genially. "One must taste all experiences, and among the great common experiences of all men is that of being a cuckold. What would be natural about a marriage in which the wife is faithful to the husband? It is practically a sin against nature."

"But," I pointed out, "it is just as natural for the husband to become indignant."

"Quite so," he admitted. "I am trying to work up a suitable indignation, but it is not easy; all the passions are feeble at my age. In the meantime I am content to let them remain together. After a while that itself will become their punishment."

"I'm afraid I don't quite follow you."

"I have always been impressed," explained Signor Cespuglio, "with the punishment which Dante contrives for the adulterous lovers Paolo and Francesca. You will remember the incident, Canto V of the *Inferno*, Second Circle, the carnal sinners. Dante in his wisdom knew that to separate the lovers would only cast a veil of romantic sentimentalism over the whole affair. Instead he condemns them to remain together forever, clasped in each other's arms and rotated violently in a hot wind. And so they fly around endlessly, in full view of a crowd of interested spectators. The situation is full of dramatic irony. Imagine, for instance, the fragrance of the human body after one has been whirled around in a humid tornado for several hundred years without taking a bath. In my opinion, the reason Francesca comes so willingly to speak to Dante is that she is ready to do anything to escape from the wearisome embrace of her lover for a few minutes."

"And so you intend to let the lovers go on stewing in the rank sweat of their enseamed bed?"

"*Hamlet*, Act III, Scene 4," identified Signor Cespuglio instantly. "If you knew your Dante as well as your Shakespeare you might in time become a student of literature. Where did you say the screw driver was?"

I found it for him, in the flowerpot where I kept my corkscrews and bottle openers.

"Thank you," he said. "And now, come along, if you would like to learn something a little more practical than the metrics of the Provençal ballade."

We got into the elevator and went down to the cellar, where he unscrewed the faceplate that held

the elevator button to the wall, and twisted the two wires together. He did the same on every floor, each time replacing the faceplate so that the mechanism appeared intact. Before he left the elevator he also turned the electric heater up to full, although it was a warm spring day, unscrewed the control knob, and slipped it into his pocket. Then he turned to me. "Let us go back to your room and continue our conversation," he said. "I believe we were talking about Dante, or perhaps it was *Hamlet*. Leave the door open; it is insufferably hot this afternoon."

When I glanced at my alarm clock in the room I saw it was five o'clock, the hour of the apéritif. "I have no Ricard," I apologized, "but if you would care for an unpretentious little white wine —"

"With pleasure," said Signor Cespuglio.

AFTER about half an hour we heard a slight noise from the landing, the faint click of a door latch, followed by silence.

"*Ecco*," Signor Cespuglio whispered. "The Black Ram."

I glanced cautiously out the half-opened door. Désiré presently sidled into view and slipped into the elevator, glancing around him nervously with a simulated air of bravado, and pushed the control button. Nothing happened. He pushed all the buttons in succession, including the switch that turned the light off and on.

"Marie-Ange!" he hissed into the corridor. "The elevator does not march."

"But what are you doing, idiot? Go down — somebody will see you."

"I am not doing anything, I tell you, the elevator does not march. I will descend by the stair."

"You will not descend by the stair, species of a goose. Push the button."

"I tell you —"

"I tell you it is only necessary to push the button."

"Come and do it yourself then, if you are so clever," he snarled.

"Ah, imbecile."

She hesitated for a moment, then she padded out furtively, barefooted, in her blue dressing gown, and pushed the button herself. Désiré threw up his hands and sulked. We could see them inside the elevator performing an ill-tempered dumb-show, gesticulating silently and pushing the buttons one after the other. They were so preoccupied that neither of them noticed when Signor Cespuglio slipped into the corridor with his screw driver and performed a slight operation on the wires behind the faceplate on the wall.

When she heard the door clang shut, Marie-Ange turned with the hoarse cry of a trapped animal, but it was too late. The machinery clanked into motion, and the elevator slowly disappeared from sight. "*Lascia ogni speranza voi ch' entrate,*" Signor Cespuglio quoted absent-mindedly into the dark chasm.

We started down the stairway to the vestibule, and meanwhile the elevator descended into the cellar and climbed upward again, the enraged cries of the lovers arousing the tenants on each floor as they passed. By the time we reached the bottom of the stairs a considerable crowd had collected. The elevator had disappeared somewhere into the upper stories of the building; far above us we heard the clunk of the reversal, and the car began to come down again. There was nothing that would stop it. The tenants ran to all floors at once and pushed the buttons, but the elevator continued its journey with the implacable stupidity of all machinery. Each time it passed us in the vestibule Marie-Ange and Désiré turned to point hysterical fingers of accusation at Signor Cespuglio, then, as they disappeared up the long shaft, we could hear them turning back to hurl

obscenities at each other. The heater, we noted as the car passed, was glowing cheerfully, and after the twentieth trip Désiré had taken off his coat and shirt. His perspiration-soaked necktie, however, was knotted too tightly for his damp fingers, and he had left it on; it dangled from his naked neck like a noose. As for Marie-Ange, she could not take anything off, since except for the blue dressing gown she did not have anything on. "Assassin!" she cried each time as she passed, in a voice which grew constantly weaker, pointing a trembling finger at Signor Cespuglio. "Help, for the love of God! We roast! Save us, in the name of the Holy Virgin!"

"Surely something could be done," indignantly protested an old lady in a mauve peignoir.

"The elevator is inarrestable," declared Mme. Méduse. "*Que voulez-vous?* It is the way of all flesh."

"But at least one could send for an electrician!"

But it was the Feast of the Assumption, and all the artisans were on a holiday; the elevator was obliged to continue its journey until the next morning at eight o'clock, when an electrician from the Boulevard Raspail arrived on his bicycle.

JEAN COCTEAU

This suggested largo is dedicated to the memory of Arnold Schönberg.

ALÉA

*Le sort ne sera pas ce qu'il serait si l'anse
Tire la lune au clair de son vase d'iris
Et pour qu'un ventre d'os y chauffe un double six
Mon astre prête-moi ta plume de silence.*

*Elle en est morte où se fracasse l'alambic
Plein du lait vénéneux de la reine des chèvres
Signe Sémiramis sur mon vase de Sèvres
Ami d'un vieil Émir aux bottines de bouc.*

*Jeté nu sans un mot des mâchoires de scie
Ce lunaire animal met en fuite les loups
Derrière l'éventail de vos cils andalous
Pierrot enfariné par quelque galaxie.*

FORTUNE

The lot will be different if the sea cove
Should draw, out of its iris urn, the moon.
That a bone belly there may warm a double six
For me, my star, lend me your pen of silence.

That dies in the place where the alembic bursts
Spilling the poison milk of the queen of goats.
For on my urn of Sevres, Semiramis' sign
Befriends an old Emir in little kid boots.

Cast bare, without a word, from between old saws
This lunar animal routs the maskers' pack:
Behind your Andalusian lashes' fan
White Pierrot's addled by some galaxy.

Translated by E. S. YNTEMA

THE TRADING STAMP:

*It is only one of
many competitive tools
that help keep
food prices down*

It is an axiom of American business that for every new competitive sales tool that comes along, another new one will come along and try to surpass it. So it is with the trading stamp.

Trading stamps are only one of several competitive tools available to the merchant seeking to increase his business volume. He may give a discount for cash. He may cut some prices and feature "loss leaders." Or he may use prize contests, giveaways or other promotion devices.

All these sales tools have two things in common. First, to be successful, they must pay their own way by the creation of new business volume. Second, they cause intense competition which has the effect of helping to hold prices down even during inflationary times. Because stamps are given nationwide, marketing experts connected with universities have been able to measure this effect in the case of stamps.

Food prices in five cities where stamps were not given by supermarkets and in ten cities

where stamps were given were compared with the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Price Index for the two years ending in December 1956. Food prices in the "stamp" cities rose less than the national average. Price increases in "non-stamp" cities were more than the average. No evidence was found that stamp stores, as a class, charged more than non-stamp stores.

It seems clear that in these inflationary times the trading stamp is needed to work side by side with the many other competitive tools also helping to keep prices down.

★ ★ ★

REFERENCES: "Status of Trading Stamps in Food and Drug Stores." Selling Research, Inc., New York, 1957.

"Competition and Trading Stamps in Retailing." Dr. Eugene R. Beem, School of Business Administration, University of California.

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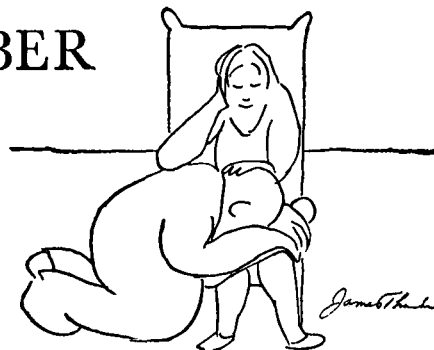
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THE YEARS WITH ROSS

BY JAMES THURBER



"Sex is an incident," Harold Ross was given to asserting, but in the offices of his NEW YORKER magazine, and indeed elsewhere in New York, it sometimes became somewhat more than that. This is the eighth part in JAMES THURBER's series.

ONE lovely day in October, 1933, Harold Ross, the unperturbable editor of the *New Yorker*, went running to Katharine White, his office confidante in times of emotional crises, with a new and wild alarm: "Now Thurber's playing with dolls!" What had scared him could have been figured out quickly and calmly by a lesser man, a man untrained in the difficult art of how to approach everything the hard way. My daughter's second birthday was coming up, and I had bought her a big, beautifully dressed French doll. One of the girls at the office had taken it out of its box to show to the others, and had then set it up on my desk with its arms extended toward the door. Ross, banging into the office, deeply worried by the state of the world, or a comma, or something, had come face to face with what he regarded as new evidence that I was getting curiously and curiously, and likely to stop writing for his magazine any minute.

Mrs. White had a much easier time allaying his fears about me that day than she had had four years before when Ross lurched into her office one morning wailing, "Now Thurber's going with actresses!" My private life, like that of everybody else on the magazine, was a constant concern and

puzzle to Ross. Married in 1922, separated in 1929, later reunited, and then divorced, and married again to a second wife, I was too much for Ross to keep track of, and my status at any moment disturbed him. The night before he plopped his new worry into Katharine's lap, he had seen me at Tony's with an actress, but only one actress, and had sat down at our table. My companion, who didn't like to drink, had a glass of lemonade on the table in front of her, but Ross, gesticulating recklessly, knocked it over. Then he ordered the lady another lemonade and knocked that over, too. This is not exaggeration, but simply the cold, damp facts.

Sex, in or near the office, in any guise or context, frightened Ross the way Carthage frightened Rome. Sex was, to him, an ominous and omnibus word that could mean anything from the first meeting of a man and a woman, through marriage and the rearing of children, to extramarital relations, divorce, and alimony. When he swore, as he often did, that he was going to "keep sex, by God, out of this office," and then added, "Sex is an incident," he meant handholding, goo-goo eyes, fornication, adultery, the consummation of marriage, and legal sexual intercourse. Whether or not Ross knew it, there was a wistful and comic military-headquarters quality in his oft-repeated directive about sex. He brusquely ordered it confined to quarters, or assigned it to KP duty to keep its mind off itself, or simply declared all the offices and personnel of the *New Yorker* magazine off-bounds for the biological urge. Sex, normal and abnormal, legal and illicit, paid little attention to Ross and his imperious commands. It hid from him, and went on about its affairs as it had been doing for thousands of years.

There were many office marriages during Ross's lifetime, among them the unions of Peter Arno and Lois Long, Andy White and Katharine Angell, Bernard Bergman and Frances Dellar, who had been Lois Long's assistant. Lois, whom Ross had been lucky enough to steal from *Vanity Fair* at the very start of the *New Yorker*, had once been an actress. She knew just how to embarrass the girl-shy editor, and loved to do it. The first time I ever saw her, the day after I went to work on the magazine, she came into his office with the devil in her eye. Ross said hastily, "Don't kiss me, Long. This is Thurber. He's going to make some sense out of this place." Lois Long, alias Lipstick, alias L.L., who could tell more about a man in two minutes than Ross sometimes found out in two years, plainly doubted it. Arno was not the only *New Yorker* who fell in love with Lois Long. A middle-aged gentleman, who was in his twenties at the time, has written me that after Lois became Mrs. Arno, he was heartbroken and for several days and nights did little except play a record of *Who?* over and over on his victrola. This lovelorn fellow, by the way, was the man who first suggested that Arno should turn the Whoops Sisters into a series. (It ran with great success until Ross decided the uninhibited sisters were becoming too drunken and bawdy for his family magazine.)

There had been a large reception room, with easy chairs, a couch or two, and screens, in the old offices in West 45th Street, but Ross had once had a shattering experience there, and he ruled out a reception room when we moved to the present quarters of the magazine. Men and women now meet in a widening of the hall, sparsely furnished, just as you step off the elevator on the nineteenth floor. It's as open as a goldfish bowl.

Ross's shattering experience, his first dismaying brush with sex in the office, occurred during the first summer of the magazine's existence. A young woman, one year out of Vassar, called on Ross with a letter of introduction from an old friend of his. He read the letter in his office and then ventured out into the reception room to interview the fair applicant for a job. She might have gotten it if she hadn't said, in conclusion, "Of course, I realize what would be expected of a girl in a place like this — I mean in addition to her regular work." Ross blenched, I have no doubt, mumbled something, turned tail, and fled from the room. Then he called a meeting of all the male members of the staff, of whom there must have been at least seven or eight at the time, and blamed them for what had just been said to him. "You're giving this magazine a bad name around town," he roared. "People are getting the wrong idea about it and about me." Nobody knew what he was talking about, but they were all used to that.

One of the chill traditions of the *New Yorker*, and I think it grew out of Ross's determination to dehumanize or at least de-emotionalize the place, was soon sensed by all of us when we went to work there. Almost nobody was ever introduced to anybody else, and there was never a general assembly of the staff to talk things over, for propinquity must have seemed to Ross a danger outweighing any benefits of staff cooperation. St. Clair McKelway had been working on the magazine for three months before we met. Lillian Ross had been there a couple of years before I met her on the stairs with someone who introduced us. Nobody has caught this cool state of unfamiliarity among co-workers better than Edmund Wilson, who became the magazine's literary critic in 1944. This is from a letter he wrote me recently:

"It was only after Russell Maloney's death that I realized that the person I had been thinking was Maloney must actually be somebody else. Since I was seeing him still in the corridors, I knew that it could not be Maloney. I thought that Geraghty was Loblano for years. That girl with the built-in tape-recorder who did those articles on Hemingway and the Stephen Crane movie — about whom I had a certain curiosity — I have never been able to identify or get anyone to introduce me to.

"I must have been working in the office for years before Ruth Flint identified me correctly, and I should undoubtedly never have known her if she had not been a friend of my wife's. At about the time I started in, a new messenger to the printer's appeared. He was old-fashioned-looking and shabby genteel, carried a briefcase, wore a black derby and an old dark overcoat; his face was pallid and faded, and he walked with averted eyes; his features were rather refined. He looked, as Ruth said, like someone who might have absconded from an English bank and come to the United States. She thought that this man was me. When she told me this, I became rather curious about him and found, on inquiry, that she was so far right that he was actually a disbarred Virginia lawyer. At one time I played with the idea of hiring him to impersonate me and deliver the lectures and after-dinner speeches for which I am sometimes asked."

Wilson was used to the office luncheons of the *New Republic* staff, and to even more intimate fraternization on the old *Vanity Fair*, where, on certain rainy days, charades were actually played by men and women of the staff. The game was instituted by the editor, Frank Crowninshield. Games at the *New Yorker*, or the merest suggestion of games, would have given Ross the jumps or an even worse seizure. Furthermore, the *New Yorker* people were not gregarious. White was a solitary luncheon, for example, and I had been on the *New*

Yorker a year before I had lunch with him. Most of us played our own versions of Post Office and Pillow here and there about town, but there was nothing doing in this area at the *New Yorker*. Oh, I could tell you a few stories, but I won't. There was another cause for the ungregariousness of the people. The first of a series of three or four *New Yorker* parties was held in the offices, in the American tradition, but there was so much spooning and goo-goo eyes, and drinking and worse, that Ross issued an edict saying that all office parties would be held elsewhere after that.

H. W. Ross was married three times to women, and once, and for keeps, to the *New Yorker* magazine. He differed from most men in that his office, not his home, was his castle. His inviolable, and formidable, selfness had no permanent fusion point with any woman. The only entity he ever fused with was the *New Yorker*. It was the deadly and victorious rival of each of his three wives. I and no other man ever heard Ross tell a dirty story, but when he became what he called "clinical" he could take your breath away with his forthrightness about the sexual nature, exploits, and disabilities of friends and acquaintances, true or just guessed at. I heard him only once in my life talk about a conquest of his own, and that time he was what Mencken used to call "spifflicated."

Ross, as I have said in an earlier piece, divided women into good and bad, but there was a subdivision of the bad, which, while not exactly good, was somehow privileged. These were the women of great talent, especially in the theater, whose deviations from convention and morality in their private lives were, by the very nature and demands of talent, excusable — "I guess," he might well have added.

One night in the 1920s Ross persuaded a country bumpkin to go with him to Texas Guinan's night club — he never took me there, perhaps because he was afraid I would lose my innocence and the winsome, childlike quality of my prose. Between marriages, and not yet permanently "off the sauce," as O'Hara puts it, he was in a merry mood, and all of a sudden, to his companion's dismay, jumped up from his chair and crossed to a table where two couples were drinking and talking and watching the show, whatever it was. The charm of one of the ladies had caught Ross's fancy and he made a gallant, though misguided, effort to bend over and kiss the back of her hand. The kiss ended up on the nape of her neck. Chairs were pushed back and the two men at the table stood up. They did not enter into the spirit of Ross's merriment. An experienced bouncer ap-

peared. The experienced Miss Guinan disappeared. The bouncer, stiff and firm, helped Ross and his friend into their overcoats and gave them their hats. Fifteen seconds after the editor's kiss, he and his companion were out on the sidewalk. Ross was bewildered and hurt. "I thought it was gay," he said dejectedly.

A few years after that, during a hiatus in both Ross's married life and mine, we made the rounds of a few night spots in the company of Burgess Meredith and Franchot Tone. Some time after midnight, in one of the gathering places of café society, I told Ross I would demonstrate how gentlemen manage a proper approach to the Strange Lady at the Next Table. She happened to be one of the more famous postdebutantes of her day, and Tone and I, arm in arm, went over to her table, bowed, and presented ourselves. We were not thrown out of the place, but we did get a cold and wordless rejection, becoming in a lady of quality. Her breeding and her hauteur were untouched by both my dark sinister Latin charm and Tone's boyish demeanor and frank open countenance. The next day I found Ross stalking the corridors of the *New Yorker*, his shoulders sagging, his mood depressed. To my "What's the matter now?" he replied, "Goddam it, I have a certain reputation to keep up in this town, and I spend one whole night helping you and Franchot Tone chase *girls* around night clubs." Once again the Great Multiplier of Menace had turned one girl into girls and was worrying about the bad effect of all women on all men.

About this same era he came upon me one evening in the Oak Room of the Algonquin having drinks with three or four other persons, including Lilyan Tashman, whom I had never met before and never saw again, and Humphrey Bogart, a drinking companion of mine since well before he played Duke Mantee in *The Petrified Forest* and went on to Hollywood and fame. Ross wouldn't sit down with us, and I detected all the signs of his discomfiture. The next day he said to me, "What the hell are you going around with *Tashman* for? She's way out of your league, Thurber." I explained that I was not going around with Miss Tashman, and that my woman companion the evening before was a housewife and homebody and the mother of four children. "A likely story," said Ross, and then, "Well, the hell with it. Now in this casual of yours here, you use a colon where anybody else would use a dash. I'm not saying you can't do it. I'm just bringing it up." After an argument, he agreed to let the colon stand, for he was, as I have said and now say again, at once the most obdurate and reasonable of editors.

The first time I met Ross's mother, more than thirty years ago, she suddenly said, "Harold was

always bashful with the girls, even as a little boy." Harold was embarrassed and shushed her instantly with "Don't tell Thurber things like that. He blabs everything. Besides, it isn't true." It was true, though. Harold Ross employed the technique I once called the "Get-Right-at-It Move" in a series of drawings I did for the *New Yorker*, "The Masculine Approach." He printed all of the drawings except that one, which showed an impassioned male leaping at a girl on a sofa, all fingers spread and the gleam of Pan in his eye. The troubled gamin from Aspen, Colorado, had no subtleties of approach to the female, no routine of sweet nothings, no romantic build-up. Before marriage, and between marriages, he was, various lovely and desirable ladies have told many of us, inclined to make a sudden and unexpected dive at them, which usually ended in chaos and the laughter of the love object. He seemed to believe that "sweep her off her feet" was to be taken literally, in the physical sense. Once, to a laughing lady he had brought down with a veritable Catfish Smith football tackle, he moaned, "What did I do wrong?" This Lochinvar, American Western style, was not alone in his shock tactics; they were practiced on ambushed damsels by a poet I know, a young publisher I used to know, and an English novelist I once met who has written of "tumbling lassies in the bracken," which puts him one up on Ross, for bracken is rougher than carpet.

It doesn't take a psychiatrist to realize that the sudden pounce, similar to what was known in the old six-day bicycle races as a "jam," is the natural reverse of the coin of masculine shyness, especially in the virile Western type, unlettered in the literature of love. There is desperation and high impatience in it, as well as desire, a restless determination to get it all over with in a smoke screen of blustery action. Ross was ever afraid that sex would forget it was an incident and become an episode, and then an interlude, and, before long, the whole story, God help us all, of a man's life.

THE psychic trauma of Ross's experience with the Vassar girl in 1925 stayed with him to the end. He jittered at the sight of an unfamiliar female face in any of the offices, and told Katharine White, as the *New Yorker* increased in size and more and more women typists and secretaries were employed, that he had to find a woman of strong character and firm hand to ride shotgun on the goddam girls on the editorial floor. He found what he was looking for in Daise Terry, in 1929, and she is still there, her hand as firm as ever, though she has ten times as many girls to control as there were thirty years ago. The editor carried a lot of his

"problems of a personal nature" to her. When my daughter was born, spang in the middle of the afternoon of Wednesday, October 7, 1931, Ross turned to Miss Terry with a nervous monologue that must have gone like this: "I hear Thurber has just had a daughter. I hope somebody's looking after him. Send Mrs. Thurber some flowers and say on the card they're from the *New Yorker*. I thought babies were born early in the morning or late at night. I'm surrounded by women and children. I have to look after everybody's personal life. Sometimes I wonder how the hell I ever get out a magazine. I hear the baby only weighs seven pounds — is that *enough*? I know damn well I weighed nine pounds. It has something to do with diet now, and is probably a fad of the doctors." Then he must have stared about him morosely and harped on a theme he never left unharped on long. "This place isn't a business office, it's a sitting room, and it's becoming a, by God, nursery."

Ross didn't like it at all when he found out, bumbling into what we called the Goings On room, that the girls there brewed both tea and coffee every afternoon, and he was appalled when he bumped into a Coca-Cola machine that had been installed while he was away. "If we have a *candy* counter, I don't want to know where it is," he bawled. "I heard somebody's daughter running up and down the hall yesterday, as if this were a goddam playpen. I understand she fell and hurt herself. I hope they found the arnica — oh, we *must* have a medicine chest somewhere in this house!"

At about that time a series of my drawings called "The War Between Men and Women" was running in the *New Yorker*, and I got a telegram one day from Dr. Logan Clendenning in St. Louis that read, "Help. I'm surrounded by women." I showed it to Ross, and he was off on his well-worn lecture again. "Doctors don't know what it is to be surrounded by women. They can turn women patients over to nurses, or psychiatrists, or something. What we need here is a registered nurse and a trained psychiatrist. It's the only office in the world where paste and scissors are kept in desk drawers. The women do that. And if they don't show up for work, you can't ask why. I wish the hell I was back on the *Stars and Stripes* — it's the only place I ever really enjoyed working."

It takes two or more women to surround the average man, but Harold Ross could look as beleaguered as Custer in the presence of only one. He let an editor go in the early years because the man brought his wife into Ross's office to meet him. Ross looked up and there she stood, seeming to be closing in on him from all sides. Very few women, even among those employed there, could

enter the inner sanctum of old Surrounded. Of the privileged females, my second wife, Helen, was one. We walked into his office one day unannounced, and he didn't start or turn pale. He had known her for quite a while by then, liked her personally, relaxed in her company, and admired her because she had been a magazine editor and once got out two monthlies all by herself, from cover to cover. More than once he grumbled, "I got *fifty* men and women I don't even know walking around here with pieces of paper in their hands, getting in each other's way, and Helen Thurber used to get out *five* magazines a month all by herself." It was on that day in his office that Ross, discussing some guilty pair, said, "I'm sure he's s-l-e-e-p-i-n-g with her." He was the only man I've ever known who spelled out euphemisms in front of adults.

Ross had not liked the idea of my getting married again, when he first heard about it, and he asked Bob Benchley to "talk to Thurber. See if you can't do something about it." Benchley did talk to me one evening, over cocktails, in his suite at the Royalton. He was repeating, I knew at once, Ross's concern: that if I became happily married, something bad would happen to my drawings and stories. Benchley was married only once and told me he didn't believe in second marriages. A man had his wife, whatever their relationship might be, and that was that. The rest was his own business. A woman friend of Bob's once gave him a drawing of mine for Christmas. It showed a man hiding in a tree while a woman on the ground is calling for him, and the donor of this Christmas gift said, "The man is poor Bob, and the woman is all those women who keep after him all the time." Later he met Helen, liked her, and said to me in an aside, "Why don't you marry the girl? What are you waiting for — Ross's permission?"

All that Ross ever said to me about Helen, before he met her, was, "Is she quiet?" Afterwards, I suppose, he was sorry, in his fashion, that he had told Benchley to see what he could do about changing my mind. It must have gratified him no end when the people in my drawings suffered no noticeable beatification except in one spot I did deliberately to scare him, which showed a man and a woman and a dog drifting dreamily among the stars; and he was further reassured when a piece called "A Couple of Hamburgers" indicated no lessening of tensions in my prose war between men and women.

WE WERE often at Ross's apartment, especially during his second marriage — to the former Fran-

ces Clark, mother of his only child — the marriage in which he was still young enough and well enough to seem comfortable at home, if I can use such big words as comfortable and home about him. Slowly he turned every apartment into an annex of his office and a gathering place for his men friends. "I got too many personal possessions," he would say. There were only a few he wouldn't have got rid of, out of a sense of escape, and among these was a collection of Gideon Bibles sent to him, from time to time and from most American cities, by his great friend Joe Cook when he was on tour. Ross kept his possessions, including his house near Stamford, but toward the end he lived in a suite at the Algonquin, looked after by a male nurse. He kept rejecting his third wife's efforts to take care of him, partly because he wanted to be let alone when he was sick. Being looked after, or cared for, at such times only fretted him. He didn't want any woman around. When, toward the end, we called on him in his Algonquin rooms, he complained about being "fussed over" and said, "I usually get rid of women callers by saying I have to lie down. One woman didn't go, even then. Two hours later when I got up, she was still sitting out here." After his death, it is said, an envelope containing a considerable amount of cash was found in a safety deposit vault marked "Getaway money." It meant, I think, get-away-from-the-world-of-women money.

He didn't want to get away from work, and kept at it until his final visit to the hospital in Boston where he died. One of his last projects, and one of his keenest interests, was the five-part Profile on Duveen by S. N. Behrman. He had one of the galley proofs in his suite on our last visit there. He had put it aside momentarily to eat what he called supper. Its nature shocked Helen a little, as it would have any woman. He was eating sardines right out of the can. "It's practically the only thing I can taste," he said. I still keep thinking, against my will, of that brief visit, and of the tired, cloyed, but dogged efforts of Ross to fight against the disease that was killing him, and I like to turn from it to brighter thoughts of him.

I remember his panic the evening he got home from work and was told that he was going to be a father. He leaped to the phone, called a woman friend who gave him the name of an obstetrician, and then called the doctor, who came running. After a brief examination, the doctor came out of the bedroom, as annoyed as Ross was distraught. "It is possible that your wife is pregnant," he said, "but it's too early to tell for certain. As it happens, this is not an emergency, as your call indicated. I could actually have taken time to eat my dinner."

"Judas, I didn't know," Ross told me the next day. "I thought you had to act fast."

Ross's daughter, Patricia, was one of the great things in his life, and the only female who could handle him with ease. When she was only seven he brought her to the Algonquin at lunchtime to show her off to his friends. She had a good time and didn't want to leave. "I have to get back to the office," he told her as she lingered in the lobby talking to people. "Just wait," she told him, and he sat back in a big chair, with a deep sigh of restive resignation, and waited. Like any other father of a first daughter, he was sure that a girl in her infancy was a fragile object. "Can she *breathe*, lying on her stomach like that?" he asked her nurse when the baby was not yet one year old, and again, "Is it all right for them to sleep with their hands above their head? I think my mother said it's bad for them, but I forget why." I remember the day he tiptoed into Patricia's room to show her to my mother. She quieted his fears about the baby's fragility. "They usually outlive their husbands," she told him, "and they always outlive their fathers, so I wouldn't worry about her."

The Gee Whiz Guy became utterly enthralled by the miraculous phenomena of conception, gestation, and parturition, and was always lecturing to one or more of us on the subject. This was his "being clinical," that attitude of mind toward the functional which was privileged — in conversation, that is, not in type. When he had been a father for less than a year he went to a party one night at the home of Charles MacArthur and Helen Hayes in Nyack. "I had gone out into the kitchen to shake up some fresh drinks," MacArthur told me, "and when I came back I stood there in the doorway listening to Ross. He was haranguing our guests, most of them fathers and mothers, and some of them grandparents, about the goddam miraculous cycle of menstruation. 'Nature is wonderful,' Ross was saying. 'The damn thing stops at the right time and then resumes without any interference or help.'" The MacArthur guests were, I gathered, mostly men and women of the world of literature and the theater, and far from being shocked or bored, they listened in fascination to this lecture by the editor of the *New Yorker*. Charlie ended his description of the scene this way, "Ross has the charm of gaucherie."

At about that same time, the spell of the miracle of birth still being upon him, he came over to me during a party at the apartment of Elliott and Norma Nugent. "I understand there's an obstetrician here, a friend of yours and Nugent's," he said. "Can we get him in a corner for a minute? I want to ask him a clinical question." The obstetrician, one of America's most distinguished, had been a fraternity brother of Elliott's and mine at Ohio State. I got him and Ross together in a

corner. The clinical question he asked him was a hypothetical one, it turned out, and it had been troubling Ross's waking hours. He wanted to know how many women could be impregnated, theoretically, all things being equal and all women being nubile and willing, by a single seminal ejaculation. The doctor told him 300,000,000. I had never seen Ross look more profoundly thoughtful. "Jeezus, nature is prodgidal," he said, "nature is prodgidal."

One morning, circa then, I found Ross, worried and stoop-shouldered, pacing a corridor, jingling those pocket coins. He came right out with his current anxiety. "Goddam it, I can't think of any *man* that has a daughter. I think of men as having boys, and women as having girls."

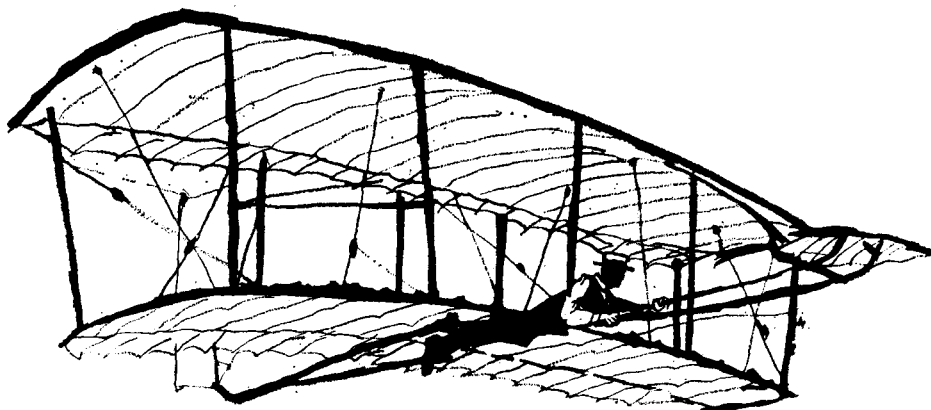
"I have a daughter," I said, "and I wanted a daughter."

"That's not natural, is it?" he demanded. "I never heard of a man that didn't want a son. Can you name any, well, you know, goddam it — terribly masculine men with daughters?" After protesting that I could outmasculine him the best night he ever saw, I said that Morris Markey, a masculine Virginian, had a daughter, and so did Joel Sayre, once described by Stanley Walker as "the wandering behemoth . . . a great man." Ross brightened, but the sun and moon of reassurance shone in his face when I came up with, "Jack Dempsey has two children, both girls." His day was saved from the wreckage of despair, but he still had one final depressed word. "Goddam it, I hate the idea of going around with female hormones in me."

Ross kept going to Boston during his last few years, first to see a specialist about his ulcers, and then to endure the torment of the bronchoscope and other ordeals after tests had shown that he had a minimal cancer. On one of these visits the man who knew almost every actress of his time called on one of his favorites backstage at a theater in which she was starring in a play translated from the French. Ross said to her, "Is the author of the play in love with you?" She turned away from her dressing-room mirror, her pretty eyes wide and her pretty lips parted, and said, "He's sixty!" Ross was fifty-eight then, with less than a year to live, and it hurt him deeply to have his age group so tactlessly brushed aside as men in whom love has turned to ashes. I was fifty-six at the time, and not crazy about what the lady said myself. I told him she never would have said it if she had realized he was nearing sixty. "She thinks you're still in your prime, as young as you look and as boyish as you talk."

Ross ran a big hand slowly over his face. "The hell with it," he said, and put, or tried to put, his mind on something else.

(To be continued)



The man who wants to

KNOW

Always, since the dawn of mankind, there has been the man who wanted to KNOW one thing or many things

Often that instinct to know was merged with the instinct to survive; in this there is nothing new.

To know how to grow food, how to build fire, how to turn a wheel--to know why a baby could die or a flower grow... all these desires play their parts in the long

story of man, thinking.

Man today is still man thinking, man seeking and studying and searching.

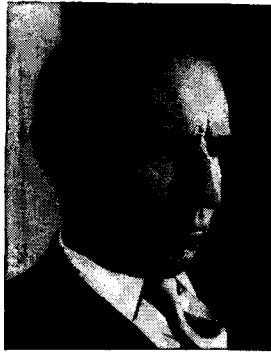
Anything that elevates thinking man to new importance must in the end favor free men over slave men.

Thus, the current upgrading of the man who wants to KNOW finds an answering upthrust in the American mind and heart.

TIME -- The Weekly Newsmagazine

BOOKSHELF

THE ATLANTIC



Karsh

The Peripatetic Reviewer BY EDWARD WEEKS

THE S.S. *Espagne*, which took me to France in the summer of 1917, will always float in my mind as the most glamorous steamer imaginable. This was my first trip abroad, and every impression was as fresh as paint. I was nineteen; I was shy, and in my gawky, ill-fitting uniform I tried to be as inconspicuous as possible in this gay, valorous ship's company.

There were French officers in their gray-blue and scarlet kepis; a detachment of American nurses, all trim and some very pretty; pilots returning to the Lafayette Escadrille wearing their Croix de guerres with palms, each palm for a Boche shot down; there was a long, emaciated Belgian officer stretched out in his steamer chair, a victim of one of the first gas attacks, now returning from Tucson to die at home; there was Cole Porter, with his harmonica on which he played his latest hit, "I've a Shooting Box in Scotland, I've a Castle in Touraine"; there was the glamorous Red Cross worker who seemed to enjoy life in a lifeboat; and, youngest of all, there were several hundred of us volunteers to the American Field Service, on our way to drive ambulances or ammunition *camions* for the French Army.

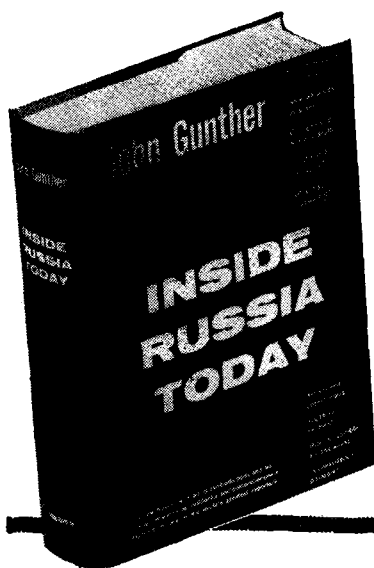
I was painfully conscious of my uniform. I had always been neat about my clothes, and now here I was decked out in a caricature of khaki. My father's shirtmaker was to blame. Dad had taken me up to him to be measured for four khaki shirts of the warmest flannel; but the shirtmaker had got drunk, and instead of cutting the flannel to my small dimensions (I weighed exactly 100 pounds), he made them to fit Dad, who was a six-footer with a 15½-inch collar. The results were appalling. I had to double the cuffs back, and the folds of extra cloth made my tunic bulge and my neck gape. I knew I could remedy all of this as soon as I got to Paris. Meantime I suffered acutely even when standing in shadows.

Our ship was unescorted, and when we came within range of the U-boats we all went on the

alert. There were lifeboat drills, and at night every porthole and companionway was blacked out. Those of us who patrolled the deck were cautioned against lighting cigarettes, and we were ordered not to wear luminous wrist watches lest their rays betray us to a submarine. We strained our eyes to scan the dark, heaving water, and it seemed a shade theatrical — though in fact the *Espagne* was torpedoed and sunk on her next trip.

There was something strange and toy-like about Bordeaux Harbor as we marched ashore; but the people who paused to watch us smiled and obviously meant us well in their incomprehensible French. I remember the hard wooden benches of the third-class compartment, and the *chocolat Meunier* and tough, chewy bread which we munched as we jogged along; I remember the vast trainyards of Paris, and the full-bloomed beauty of the city itself as we glimpsed it on our way to headquarters at Rue Raynouard and as we took it in more fully in the days that followed.

I had carried a tennis racket, a Slazenger, over with me to be used on leave, and this I parked at the University Club. I ordered a whipcord uniform and light cotton shirts (sitting in my underwear in the shirtmaker's dressing room while the first of them was stitched); I had my first dinner and my first champagne at the Hotel Continental, and two tables away sat Guynemer, the French ace, his pale face the more striking because of his black uniform, the ribbons on his breast attesting his forty victories; afterwards, with Harry Crosby and Tote Fearing, I spent my first evening at the Follies. The uniforms, the fantastic women, the color and vitality of the stage where the argot was quicker than we could follow; the bar during intermission where I had my first drink with an Australian ("Hi, digger, what'll you have?"); this hypnotic experience of sound and sex and laughter was bound together and made real by a sense of exhilaration, by the feeling that we were all in this show together.



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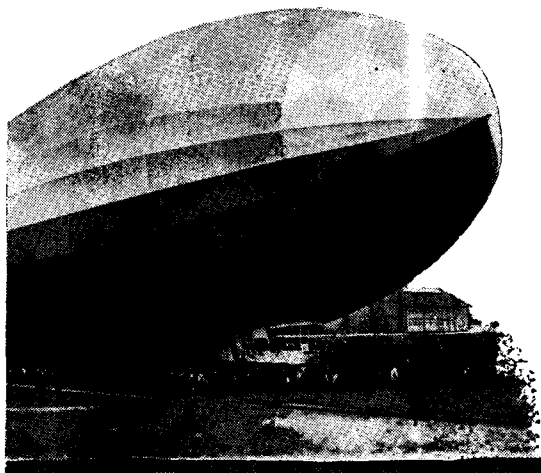
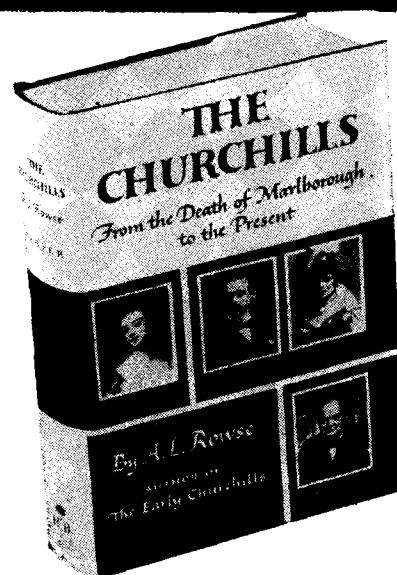
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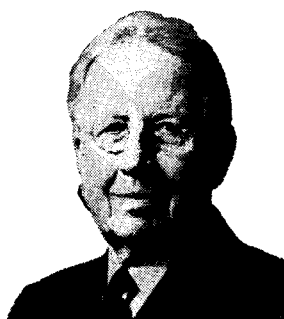
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**HARPER
& BROTHERS**

N. Y. 16

The French educated us in many things: to speak French (since they manifestly had no intention of speaking English); to eat horsemeat, which was our main ration at the training camp; to drive our ambulances with a respect for shattered men; and at Verdun, where we served that July and again that November, to do our work by night over roads muddy and potholed beyond belief. Our real instructors were the *brancardiers*, the stretcher-bearers, men in their late forties and fifties who had been pulled out of the infantry and assigned to the tender but hazardous task of conveying the wounded in their *pousse-pousses* from the front line to the *poste de secours*. These men were old enough to be our fathers; they had seen more than they wanted of death, and yet they were endlessly patient in their teaching of these raw Americans, to whom a pile of stiffs under a tarpaulin in the shed behind the *poste* was still something of a grizzly curiosity. They taught us their card games and how to enjoy *pinard* at their *popote*. They taught us the humor and irony of the French newspapers; they taught us tenacity and, in their handling of the wounded, compassion. And finally, in those perilous days of March, 1918, when the Germans had broken through, they showed us the anguish which is in every Frenchman's eyes when his country seems dreadfully in peril.

Clemenceau and Foch and Papa Joffre were the great leaders then, but the men who taught us France, and whose lessons after forty years I still remember, were those weary but tenacious old *bleus*.

THE FRENCH YARDSTICK

There has long been a special affinity between the French and the Americans. It began indeed during our Revolution with our gratitude for such volunteers as Lafayette, and for the weight of ships and arms which turned the tide at Yorktown. Then and repeatedly thereafter, Frenchmen who have come to our shores have been eager to size us up and to draw the parallels between the two democracies. Tocqueville, André Siegfried, and Raoul de Roussy de Sales were three such observers, and now speaks a fourth, JACQUES MARITAIN, who has lived amongst us for nearly a quarter of a century and whose *REFLECTIONS ON AMERICA* (Scribner's, \$3.50) is a statement of faith in us which is penetrating, hopeful, and at times profound.

He begins by describing the love at first sight which he underwent on his arrival, and he stresses the sharp, far-reaching contrast which was uppermost in his first impressions, a contrast between the people on the one hand and what he calls "the structure of civilization" on the other. He speaks

of the kindness in the American character, of the multiplicity of our communities, of our circles within circles, and of how the feelings and instinct of such communities are much stronger in this country than in Europe. He remarks that America is "a country entirely turned toward the future, not toward the past." He is impressed by Frederick L. Allen's statement that "the reform movement of this century . . . the revolt of the American conscience which was kindled by Theodore Roosevelt, the elder La Follette, and Woodrow Wilson, brought about an automatic redistribution of income from the well-to-do to the less well-to-do. . . . We had discovered a new frontier to open up: the purchasing power of the poor."

This brings M. Maritain to the keynote of his book, to the belief that by a strange paradox the American people are exercising a steady unsystematic pressure upon their industrial civilization, and that they are transforming this huge material structure from capitalism into a new phase, which he terms "economic humanism." The friendliness of his words and the revelation which he gives us of the evolution so steadily at work here is at once tonic and reassuring.

TURNING POINT

The instinct which prompted KENNETH ROBERTS in his mid-thirties to turn away from a most profitable journalism and devote himself to the writing of historical novels about the American Revolution in the north country resulted in a permanent contribution to our literature. Before his death last summer, Mr. Roberts completed a brilliant episode which was to have been a part of a new novel about the fighting in the South.

THE BATTLE OF COWPENS (Doubleday, \$3.50) is the evaluation of one of the great turning points in our struggle for independence. It came late in the war, when the patriot cause, as Washington told Congress, was in a "ruinous and deplorable condition." The Continental currency was worthless, and the fighting in the North had reached such a stalemate that Washington was seriously concerned lest he might have to dissolve the Army for a year until our strength recuperated. It was at this crisis that Clinton sent Lord Cornwallis and his dashing cavalry leader, Banastre Tarleton, South to mop up Savannah and Charleston in what might prove to be the final stroke of the war. Tarleton had a superb striking force — field guns, light dragoons, Highlanders, and three battalions of British regulars, augmented by such Loyalists as he picked up along the way. He made fast time in that almost impassable country; he hit hard, and his sabers were dreaded.

Opposed to him was a ragged little force under

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By **MAZO DE LA ROCHE**

Brigadier General Daniel Morgan. Morgan had served as a wagoner in General Braddock's march on Fort Duquesne, and as a result of one interchange with a British lieutenant, he had been sentenced to receive 499 lashes. It did not kill him, and it did not improve his liking for the British. The matching of these two men — the professional cavalry officer and the rugged mountaineer — the pursuit and the desperate stand which brought their two forces together on the hidden slopes at Cowpens, is a clash which Mr. Roberts delights to tell. He prepares for this battle with the forethought of the participants; he studies every shred of evidence for motive and for mischance. Probing and irascible, sparing in his praise, he shows the courage and the meanness which were both part of this forgotten fight, and he reminds us in his stirring prose of what the victory, achieved in one hour, meant to the Colonies.

THE COUNTRY WITHOUT EYEBROWS

FANNY KEMBLE WISTER has performed a valuable service for all lovers of Americana in her editing and presentation of the journals and letters of her father, Owen Wister, *OWEN WISTER OUT WEST* (University of Chicago Press, \$5.00).

Owen Wister was a Philadelphian who was born with a silver spoon in his mouth and endowed with most of the graces. He loved music and played the piano exceptionally well. At Harvard, where he had a host of friends, he was seemingly destined for a career in either music or the law.

In the summer of 1885 he went West for his health to a ranch in Wyoming, at that time still a territory. Here he tasted air he had never breathed before; he lived with ranchers and studied the Indians; he shot elk and he caught rainbow trout. He also caught a glimpse of the hard, ruthless cruelty which accompanied the wastefulness in this frontier land, and in more tranquil moments he caught glimpses of what the future might hold.

Six times in the ensuing decade he was to come back to this wildness, and the more he saw of it the less he wished to practice law. He began to make notes about the men he encountered at bars, in the ranches, and on the roundups; and these men became the prototypes for his big novel, *The Virginian*, the grandfather of all Westerns, which was to establish him for life as an author.

In his journals one can see how this sensitive Philadelphian was swept by the beauty of the dawn and the prairie night, how he was shocked by such brutality as he was compelled to witness at Tisdale's ranch, and how he was attracted by such men as Corporal Skirden of the Second Cavalry, with whom he rode over miles of desert and mountain. "He, more definitely than any

frontier character I had met," writes Owen Wister in his preface to *The Virginian*, "continually realized and ratified my imaginary portrait, made me sure of my ground, confident that I was keeping well inside the actualities of frontier characters; so that, within six months after the book's appearance, letters — half a dozen at least — had come to me, in which each writer was quite sure he knew who the 'original' of the Virginian was — and it was never the same original, nor were any of them known to me."

He took discomfort and exposure as they came, and he wrote with an unrestraint, with a force and realism rare for that time. "This is the country without eyebrows," he noted. "Can I apply acid to my English, tell nothing till the sharp cutting metal is left?"

THE SINEWS OF LOVE

MARTHA GELLHORN, who received the O. Henry award last year for her story "The Smell of Lilies," which originally appeared in the *Atlantic*, is one of our very best writers. To the swift and vibrant medium of the short story, she brings a richness of experience, a tenderness and a depth of feeling, and a power of characterization which I believe have never shown to better effect than in her new book, *TWO BY TWO* (Simon and Schuster, \$3.50).

There are four long stories in this book with one central theme: the sinews which bind but do not always hold men and women together; call them the sinews of love. There is thus in each a dual portrait, with sometimes the shadow or presence of a third person looking over the shoulder.

The stories are remarkably diverse in their settings: in the first, we are taken to the Italian castle of the Ferentino family at the moment of its liberation by the Americans — a liberation so true and spontaneous to read about, and so pathetic in that it does not last. Here the tendons which bind Kitty, once of Chicago, to Prince Andrea have a sensitivity which keeps one dwelling in the narrative from the very first page.

In the second story, Miss Gellhorn is writing of London society and of Rose Answell, a political climber, as ruthless with her husbands as she is with her women friends.

The third story is the *Atlantic* prize winner, re-titled to fit in with the title scheme of the book; and the fourth — perhaps the most vivid and powerful of the book — is about Bara, the famous war photographer. Miss Gellhorn makes him dominant, magnetic, and endearing as he comes to us through the eyes of his mistress and his most understanding friend, Lep, the Pole. This is good writing; it is also very good entertainment.

A work of religious and historic importance even more absorbing and significant than his earlier book

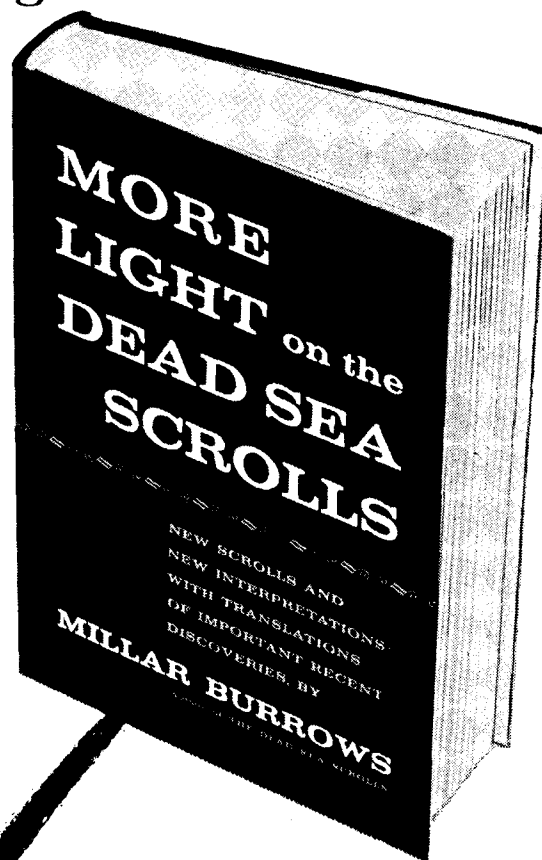
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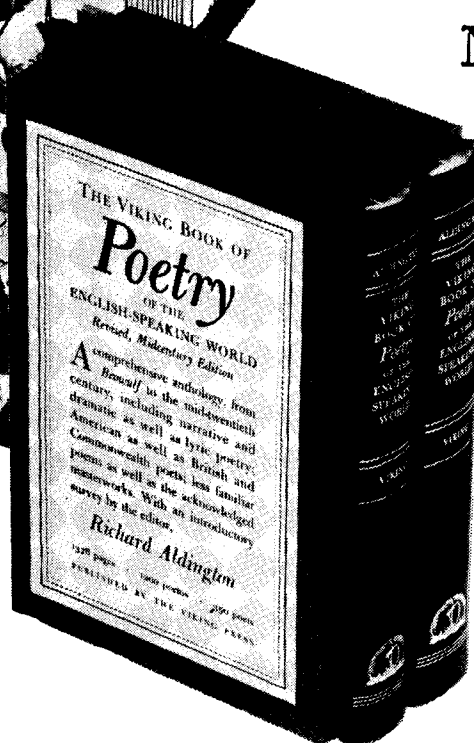
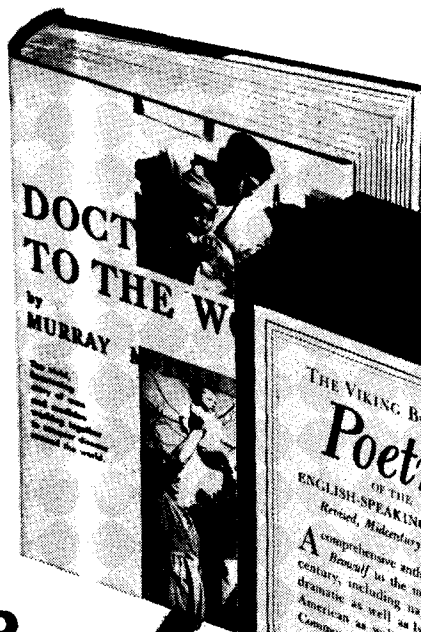
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BOOKSHELF

THE ATLANTIC



Reader's Choice

BY CHARLES ROLO

A long line of Americans stretching back to Thomas Jefferson have shared the sentiment reflected in the saying: "Everyone has two countries — his own and France." Jefferson himself wrote: "France, freed from that monster, Bonaparte, must once again become the most agreeable country on earth. It would be the second choice of all whose ties of family and fortune give a preference to some other one, and the first choice of all not under those ties." America's long-standing love affair with France has in recent years shown signs of strain. We are exasperated by French politics; we are ready to argue that France's cultural supremacy is a thing of the past; we are apt to complain that French prices have reached a new high and *politesse* to foreigners has sunk to a new low. But comes the season for travel, and Americans go on flocking to France by the hundreds of thousands — some of them for the second, the third, or the tenth time — thereby demonstrating that the lures of France retain a potent magnetism.

This magnetism is apparent, too, in the sphere of American publishing, where the French and their country continue to hold a fair share of our attention. In keeping with the theme of this issue, I propose to devote most of the notes that follow to books (either new or relatively recent) about France — its food and wine, its capital, its history, its politics, and its culture.

LA FRANCE GASTRONOMIQUE

THE FOOD OF FRANCE (Knopf, \$10.00) by WAVERLEY ROOT, the fruit of travels and research spanning three decades, is the best book on

this subject available in English. Invitingly printed, liberally illustrated, and equipped with useful gastronomic maps, it is a handsomely produced volume of nearly 500 pages. Its considerable size and price may seem forbidding to prospective travelers, but to anyone intent on making the most of France's gastronomic glories it can hardly fail to pay large dividends in added enjoyment.

Most contemporary food books and guidebooks are strictly objects of utility, but Mr. Root's treatise is also a pleasure to read — so tantalizingly evocative that it fills one with an overwhelming urge to take off for France. The author approaches food "as an integral . . . element in the whole pattern of the society in which it has developed." Thus gastronomic lore and counsel are agreeably laced with notes on the landscape and with what Aldous Huxley has called "culture gossip": brief excursions into history, art, architecture, and local customs. When, for instance, Mr. Root is writing about Touraine — where "the fine, subtle cooking of modern France developed" — he gossips about its châteaux; about Rabelais and Balzac (natives of the province) and Leonardo da Vinci (who is buried there); about Diane de Poitiers, Catherine de Médicis, and other "masterful mistresses" of the French kings.

The gastronomic information dispensed is encyclopedic in range. I learned, among other things, that there exist several *red* Champagnes; that Camembert should be tenderly protected from drafts; that restaurants as we know them came into being in the eighteenth century, after an enterprising bouillon maker had put up a sign advertising his soups as "*restaurants divins* — heavenly pickups" and had done a roaring business.

Mr. Root's gastronomic travelogue is divided into four main sections: The Domain of Butter, The Domain of Fat, The Domain of Oil, and the Pyrenees (where several traditions of cooking coexist). It concludes with two valuable appendixes: a guide to the best restaurants in the provinces, and a selection of restaurants in Paris which specialize in regional cooking (including that of the Paris region). Another admirable feature of the book is the attention it devotes to the many delightful and inexpensive *vins*

du pays, which are virtually unknown beyond their own locality because they don't stand up to travel. The treatment of other wines, though generally excellent, calls for one cautionary note — the vintage years which Root recommends sometimes go back too far and are not sufficiently up-to-date, especially in the case of the white Burgundies and the Champagnes. The early vintages mentioned are unobtainable in most places, and they are also liable to be past their prime.

There exists a legend, which possibly owes something to nostalgia, that once upon a time it was possible to eat not only cheaply but extremely well in practically any bistro in Paris. This is definitely not true today: the average bistro's *bifteaux*, *pommes frites*, and watery *Beaujolais en carafe* are nothing to write home about. But every knowledgeable Parisian has his own jealously guarded list of exceptional bistros, where the food is magnificent and the prices are decidedly lower than in the restaurants on the tourist circuit. The problem of tracking down these elusive places has been solved for us by ALEXANDER WATT, an English newspaperman who has lived twenty-five years in Paris. His **PARIS BISTRO COOKERY** (Knopf, \$3.00) is both a guide to his fifty favorite bistros and a cookbook which gives receipts of their specialties. For good measure, Mr. Watt has included a glossary of French culinary terms and dishes, a vintage chart, and a list of French cheeses together with the wines best suited to each. In fact, he seems to have thought of everything that would give his book the maximum utility. He furnishes the addresses, telephone numbers, and closing days of his bistros; singles out the strong points of the cellar; indicates price, if it is above or below the average; and brings the *ambiance* crisply to life. On my next trip to Paris, this Baedeker of the bistro will certainly go with me.

THE FACE OF PARIS

In **PARIS SKETCHBOOK** (Braziller, \$3.95) RONALD SEARLE, the gifted English illustrator, has not gone hunting desperately for novelty: he has registered what is typical, and with very appealing results. His wife, KAYE WEBB, has accompanied his drawings with a commentary that is no whit less engaging.



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Mr. Searle's sketches have grace and wit and charm. They show us street scenes, markets, fairs, the interiors of restaurants, a public convenience, the shop front of a horse butcher, the hats of middle-aged Parisiennes, the lovely, intimate places (such as the Place des Vosges) in which Paris abounds. There are vignettes of the many kinds of night life, and there is a fine gallery of Parisian types: the taxi driver, the policeman on his bicycle, the little girl with the hoop, the showgirl with a variant of the fig leaf, the patrons at cafés, the ice cream vender, the infinitely patient fishermen on the *quais*. By rendering these familiar signs with skill and style, Mr. Searle has succeeded in capturing the seductive essences of Paris.

Two volumes in the series, Famous Places as Seen by Great Painters, together form a unique pictorial history of the French capital. **PARIS IN THE PAST** (Skira, \$6.50) extends from the fourteenth century to Daumier, **PARIS IN OUR TIME** (Skira, \$6.50) from the Impressionists to the present. In both books, the text by **PIERRE COUTHION** is pleasantly discursive. The color plates (142 all told), though small, are of fine quality; and they have the merit of including a good many pictures in private collections which have never been reproduced before.

HISTORY AND POLITICS

Two outstanding additions to the writings in English on French history have appeared within the past year: the up-to-date edition of **ANDRÉ MAUROIS'S A HISTORY OF FRANCE** (Farar, Straus & Cudahy, \$7.50), and **THE FRENCH NATION: FROM NAPOLEON TO PÉTAINE** (Harper, \$4.50) by **D. W. BROGAN**. M. Maurois, as everyone knows, has a genius for what might be termed serious popularization; and his chronicle — tinged with patriotism and the romantic outlook, but not to any reprehensible degree — comes reasonably close to being an ideal survey of France's past for the general reader. Mr. Brogan works in an altogether different but also highly palatable vein. His style is astringent, his temper critical, and he has a racy sense of humor. A British historian and political scientist who is one of the foremost contemporary authorities on the United States as well as France, Brogan is a scholar in whom there is more than

a spark of the professional entertainer.

Mr. Brogan's concluding remark about the France of 1940 is only too true of France today: "A people which . . . had astonished the world in every field of achievement, which had known every form of glory . . . had yet failed to find institutions that united the French people and gave them a political way of life worthy of their genius." What were the sources of this failure?

Mr. Brogan's brilliant exposition of the historical record implicitly supports, in many respects, the thesis developed in **HERBERT LUETHY'S FRANCE AGAINST HERSELF** (Praeger, \$6.50; paperback, \$1.45), which remains, three years after its publication, the most illuminating post-war study of the French social system. M. Luethy argues that the class which carried out the French Revolution — lawyers, notaries, members of courts, and counsels of every kind — was one which had risen to prominence as a result of the cumbersome machinery and parasitic practices of the *ancien régime*; and that this class became a self-perpetuating bureaucracy, which has tenaciously preserved many of the archaic and wasteful features of the old, highly centralized administrative structure. Thus the Revolution left France with a deeply split personality: a revolutionary ideology whose effect was to make citizens regard the state as an impostor, an enemy; and an implacably conservative bureaucracy, so solidly entrenched as to constitute the real government of France. This bureaucracy, and all sections of the electorate which have shared or absorbed its outlook, have opposed changes that would give France stronger cabinet government. They have been hostile to great leaders, great ideas, above all great effort and sacrifice. Napoleon boasted that the French preferred glory to bread. But now we find a French weekly saying that France is "*le pays de la médiocrité*" and that its ambitions are to have a pot belly at forty, a pension at sixty.

This appraisal of what de Gaulle has referred to as "the system" finds dismal confirmation in the story of the one post-war politician who squarely challenged the system: Pierre Mendès-France, the subject of **ALEXANDER WERTH'S LOST STATESMAN** (Abelard-Schuman, \$5.00).

Mendès-France rose to promi-



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nence in the early nineteen-fifties as the most forceful critic of *immobilisme*. He was swept into the premiership by the desperate need for bold action to end the catastrophic war in Indochina. But the popularity his success won him was short-lived in France. The policies that made him something of a hero to the American and British press — his constructive handling of the Tunisian situation; his advocacy of concessions in Algeria; his proposals for cutting down subsidies to producers of alcohol, stepping up housing construction, and modernizing industry — ran into bitter opposition in the Assembly, and right-wing forces mounted a smear campaign which represented him as the "betrayor" of France. After the fall of his government, his struggle for a liberal settlement in Algeria made him increasingly unpopular.

His career suggests that a French politician with vision, and the courage *not* to play the game according to the bad old rules, is doomed to find aligned against him an invincible coalition of the defenders of *immobilisme*, irresponsibility, and corruption. In the densely documented pages of *Lost Statesman*, we see how pathological is the condition of the French body politic.

THE CULTURAL SCENE

To round off this survey of readings about France, here is a check list of books dealing with things cultural. **THE CULTURE OF FRANCE IN OUR TIME** (Cornell University Press, \$5.00), a symposium edited by JULIAN PARK, covers a broad field in ten well-packed essays. Symposia have a dismal tendency to be stodgy, but this volume has caught and communicated the vitality of its subject. The contributors convey an astonishing amount of information without merely cataloguing.

On French letters, there are three studies of current or recent vintage — **THE CONTEMPORARY FRENCH NOVEL** (Oxford University Press, \$5.00) by HENRI PEYRE, chairman of the department of French at Yale; **AN AGE OF FICTION: THE FRENCH NOVEL FROM GIDE TO CAMUS** (Rutgers University Press, \$5.00) by GERMAINE BRÉE and MARGARET GUITON; and **A GUIDE TO CONTEMPORARY FRENCH LITERATURE** (Meridian Books, \$1.45) by WALLACE FOWLIE. The Brée-Guiton and the Peyre studies of the novel have both served me well, and

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I'd be hard put to choose between them. The former, published in 1957, is more up-to-date by two years, while the latter is more comprehensive — it supplements the discussion of the major figures with "a panorama of [ninety-one] present-day novelists." Mr. Fowlie's treatment of the novel is not as full, but he includes an interesting section on the theater and the cinema, plus chapters on poetry and the essay.

My appetite for reading about castles is, I'm afraid, small; but I can safely commend *THE CHÂTEAUX OF FRANCE* (Hastings House, \$7.50) to those who enjoy fugues describing battlements and towers, molded architraves and rusticated niches. The author, **RALPH DUTTON**, writes *con amore*; his learning is immense, and his book is graced with more than a hundred illustrations. The splendors of French religious architecture are superbly reproduced in *FRENCH CATHEDRALS* (Houghton Mifflin, \$7.50), which contains 196 magnificent photographs by **MARTIN HÜRLIMANN** and a brief interpretative text.

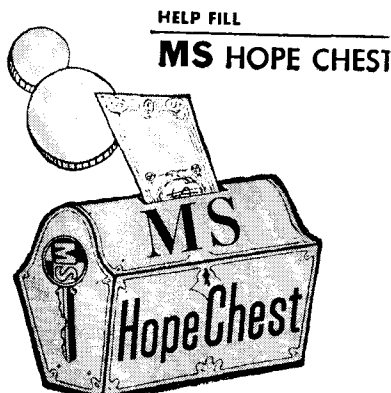
Several of the aspects of France that I have touched on, and a good many others, are lightly covered in a cheerful omnibus assembled and decorated by **LUDWIG BEMELMANS**: *HOLIDAY IN FRANCE* (Houghton Mifflin, \$5.00). The contributors include Colette and Art Buchwald, S. J. Perelman and Maurois; and they take us roving from the low life of Marseilles to the *higlife* of Deauville and Biarritz, from Paris night clubs to Notre Dame, from the *maison Dior* to the French Academy and the Palace of Versailles.

INSIDE COMMUNISM

In the fall of 1955, **SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR** spent six weeks in China as a guest of the government, and now she confronts us with a 500-page incantation celebrating the achievements and moral virtues of the Communist regime. As readers of this department may have noticed, I have always been in sympathy with the critics of Chiang Kai-shek; and I am prepared to believe an open-minded observer such as James Cameron (*Mandarin Red*) when he reports that the Communist regime has in certain respects improved the lot of the Chinese people. But Simone de Beauvoir is so doctrinaire a thinker, so fervently committed to revolutionary utopianism, that the findings



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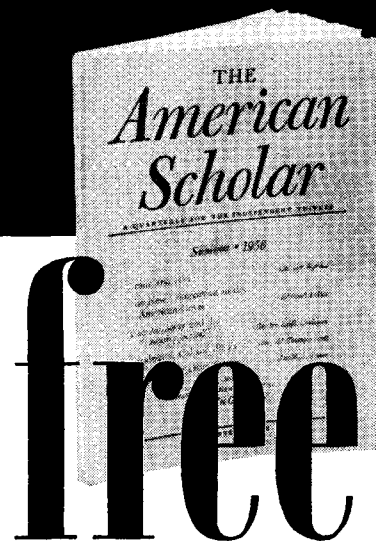
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presented in **THE LONG MARCH** (World, \$7.50) are not much more reliable than official Communist propaganda.

The Hungarian revolt and its suppression have not ruffled de Beauvoir's faith in the syllogism which governs her political outlook and which runs as follows: One's duty to the future is to support the cause of the proletariat, and this cause is that of the Communist Party; therefore one must support Communism, the only ideology which stands for progress. Although she is a high priestess of Existentialism, a philosophy in theory diametrically at odds with Marxism, de Beauvoir now shamelessly deploys the whole squalid lexicon of Marxist-Leninist double-think and gobbledegook. She says that a policy was "implemented too radically" instead of saying that it led to an orgy of executions or other excesses. Imprisonment is referred to as "re-education"; critics of the regime are "counterrevolutionaries"; Chinese novels are discussed in terms of rightist and leftist "deviations." The Communist concept of freedom of thought, we are told, is preferable to that of the "bourgeois" democracies: we should admire it for penalizing "negative" criticism and thereby protecting the people from being confused and corrupted. This kind of verbal and doctrinal sewage is spattered throughout the book, and it gave me a bad case of nausea.

The Chinese Communists, according to de Beauvoir, have avoided most of the costly mistakes which were made by the Russians through overimpatience to liquidate the past. Conscious of the force of tradition, the Chinese are carrying out a "cautious" revolution, whose slogan is "Let us use yesterday as a stepping-stone to tomorrow." Already, however, the achievements of the Communist regime seem to de Beauvoir nothing short of spectacular. It has done a tremendous cleaning-up job — has made China sanitary and eliminated beggars. It has greatly improved the condition of the peasantry and the status of women, is making impressive progress in the industrialization of China, is waging an energetic and successful campaign against illiteracy. Like all apologists for Communism, de Beauvoir is infatuated with statistics, and she bombards us with such data as the rise in the catties of rice harvested per mu. How much of her stuff is reasonably true and how much of it is

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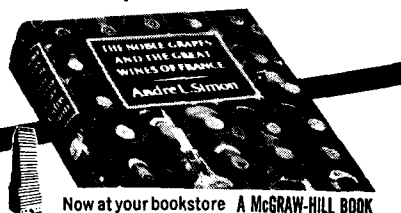
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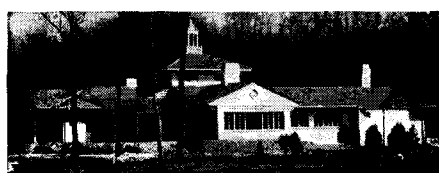
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false is impossible to judge. All I can say with certainty is that her effusions are for the most part a suffocating bore. She is probably the most long-winded woman writer currently in business and definitely the most humorless.

JOHN GUNTHER'S *INSIDE RUSSIA TODAY* (Harper, \$5.95) is the timeliest of his books and to this reader the most fascinating. "The lesson of Soviet science," Gunther writes, "is that the Russia of today is a strong country . . . and that the democratic world must acknowledge this . . . and face the future with a hard, imaginative new look." Gunther's point of view is simply that, however repugnant we find Soviet institutions, we must adjust to the necessity of coexisting with them; and if only as a matter of self-preservation, we must learn more about the Russians. Well, a great many Americans are going to learn a lot more about them from John Gunther, who remains the world's champion reporter-encyclopediaist. As a political analyst, he betrays that he is unsure of himself by his constant hedging; but from the standpoint of reporting, he has done a miraculous job of accumulating massive amounts of information. And in the case of Russia, every bit of information helps — whether it be that the Russians dote on ice cream (one factory makes thirty-six flavors), or that they have 41,000 teachers of English, or that they have had an industrial atom power plant in operation for more than three years.

FICTION CHRONICLE

The behavior of human beings under the extreme pressures of war is the central concern of three otherwise altogether different novels: *TWO WOMEN* (Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, \$4.95) by ALBERTO MORAVIA; *THE MOUNTAIN ROAD* (Sloane, \$3.95) by THEODORE WHITE; and *THE UNDERGROUND CITY* (Random House, \$4.95) by H. L. HUMES.

Moravia's story is told by a widow who owns a grocer's shop in Rome. The food shortage and the fear of bombings prompt her to set out with her seventeen-year-old daughter for the home of her parents in the country south of Rome, where she plans to stay until peace is restored. But the two women fail to get through, and are forced to spend months in a desolate mountain region, where

they suffer terrible privation and indignities. The novel's theme is that war destroys innocence and principle — the daughter becomes a prostitute, the mother a thief. But Moravia also asserts the resilience of the human spirit; its capacity to emerge from numbness and degradation and to be, as it were, reborn. The story is deeply felt, for Moravia himself and his wife were refugees in the same region during the war. *Two Women* is less probingly analytic and less provocative than Moravia's other works, but it has more compassion and more warmth.

The framework of *The Mountain Road*, a Book-of-the-Month Club selection, is the great retreat in East China in 1944. The story is pinpointed on an American major in charge of a demolition squad which is withdrawing from Liuchow along the only road leading northward into the mountains. Major Baldwin's orders are to hold up the Japanese advance by demolitions along the route, which is clogged with refugees, and the dilemmas dramatized in the action have to do with the use and the misuse of power.

Mr. White writes in a tradition derived from Hemingway, whose fiction has given his readers precise instructions on how to fish, shoot big game, blow a bridge, or make love in a gondola. *The Mountain Road* is another example of the how-to-do-it novel: it reads like a painstaking report on the work of a demolition squad (where to put the gelignite, and so forth) rather than like a work of the imagination. This does not prevent it, however, from being a gripping and moving affair which vividly records the tragic complexities of the chaotic Chinese situation in the last years of the war.

The Underground City is a long, ambitious first novel, whose spiritually battered hero, John Stone, is a former American secret agent who worked with the French underground. The hub of the plot is the *affaire* Dujardin. Thanks to Stone's testimony, Dujardin has been sentenced to death for collaborationism and is awaiting execution; but now the Communists — to make trouble for the Americans — announce that they have a witness who can prove Dujardin's innocence. The novel has power, energy, and suspense. But it also struck me as overinflated, a bit on the pretentious side, and guilty of gratuitous mystification

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BREAD LOAF SCHOOL OF ENGLISH SCHOLARSHIPS — Bread Loaf School of English of Middlebury College, Vermont, announces the award of two scholarships covering tuition for the 1958 session of Bread Loaf School of English: one to Annette Basalyga, Marywood College, Scranton, Pa. (for her poem "Windfall") and one to Sister M. Paulinus, Instructor of Miss Basalyga.

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UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH SCHOLARSHIP — The University of Pittsburgh awards a four-year scholarship (free tuition) to David Nyhan, Brookline High School, Brookline, Mass. (for his story, "Varsity Club Banquet").

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Accent on

THE French are not given to pressing cash on strangers, and I felt that I had schemed the budget for our final week in France with nothing overlooked. My wife and I would be leaving Paris in our motorcycle and sidecar on a Thursday, bound for Cherbourg. The *Leviathan* would sail the following Tuesday (what was called "tourist third" at the time cost \$90 for a single passage). For the interval, after settling purchases, hotel, and laundry, we could command something like \$42. We would embark broke, but that was part of the budget, and putting that fine a point on it after three months on tour gave me an extra satisfaction. We had our tickets, and the position in short looked unassailable. I had even taken the precaution of writing home to suggest that \$50 would be helpful if cabled to us at the Credit Lyonnaise in Cherbourg.

Paris garages in the year 1925 refused, for mysterious reasons, to store motorcycles, and I had counted myself fortunate in finding a cycle shop in the Cour du Dragon, the old seventeenth-century coaching yard near Saint Germain des Prés, which would take in my *moto* for one franc a day — a shade less than a nickel at the time. To this establishment, I estimated, I would owe roughly 90 cents.

I must explain that my Indian motorcycle was equipped with magneto ignition, with a generator-bat-

tery system for the lights. So, when the battery case split, from the pounding the rough French roads were giving it somewhere along the Riviera, we continued to travel, but the lack of lights obliged us to knock off each day before dark. I had mentioned this, conversationally, to the bicycle-shop man on arrival, but with no thought of getting a new battery until we reached New York.

It was shocking, therefore, and my budget all but collapsed, when the bicycle-shop man, corroborated by a hard-faced female, greeted me with a perfectly correct bill for storage to which he had added 300 francs, or close to \$15, for a new battery.

A bitter no-yes-no-yes dispute got me nowhere. I paid up in a blazing exchange of incivilities and drove off to 19 Quai Voltaire to pick up my wife and stow the luggage aboard.

We skipped luncheon, and wonderfully inexpensive lodgings and dinner at Beauvais that night restored to me the illusion that our finances, now down to \$25, were ample for any contingency. So far as the French were concerned, that was probably true, but I was reckoning without thought of a statement I had made to my wife some days earlier in refusing to take her to the Tour d'Argent for Canard Rouennaise.

"A tourist trap," I had said to her. "If you really want to try a proper

duck Rouennaise, wait until we get to Rouen on the way to the boat."

These were the words that returned to confound me the next noon, when we came noisily — with much backfiring and gunning of the engine — to a spectacular stop in Rouen. (I had long since found that the French respected a motor vehicle in direct proportion to the roar of its exhaust noise, and the Indian's muffler cutout plus the overrun on a lean mixture gave us far more status than any American car of the period could have done.)

"I'll find some little place for lunch," I said. But no. Certainly not. Had I forgotten?

Forgotten what?

My promise to have Canard Rouennaise at Rouen — a promise, no less.

In the discussion that followed, I learned that my wife would not leave Rouen without having experienced the duck. And if I were not going to provide it, she would go to the best restaurant in town, order it for herself, and let the check settle itself as best it might.

Neither of us had breakfasted, and the thought of the duck affected us powerfully. Five minutes later we were sitting down in the Restaurant de la Cathedrale, a beautifully paneled old room with a vast game press, glossy napery, and a great air of well-being. The proprietor, who said he had cooked in Colorado during the

gold rush and spoke feelingly of antelope steaks and *le canard sauvage* in those parts, was charmed to offer his duck to a couple of hungry young Americans. His ritual was quickly in full swing.

A few minutes later, the sommelier tendered me the wine list, ticking off on his fingers three or four possibilities for which the house was celebrated. I had all but forgotten the wine, in determining from the menu that the duck, for two, would stand me close to \$8. I decided to hold the line. "*Le vin rouge ordinaire*," I said, trying to make these paltry words sound like a deeply considered choice, or at least like an eccentricity of my own.

The sommelier excused himself and returned with the proprietor. Surely some misunderstanding, the proprietor suggested. An *ordinaire*? With the duck? He looked at me with the eyes of a wounded spaniel. Not at all, I said grandly. A Pomard was desired, something of his own selection. There was no further niggling about the luncheon, and we left a total of some \$14 at the Restaurant de la Cathedrale for our most expensive meal of the trip and one of the best at any price.

We dined that night in our attic lodgings under the eaves of a lofty old house directly across a narrow street from the bell tower of the cathedral, from which crashed and boomed the half hours in an awesome proximity. For dinner I bargained fiercely for a third of a loaf of bread and a Camembert, and the remains of these were our breakfast the next morning. We could have reached Cherbourg in a single burst of driving at any time, but we decided that by skipping luncheon and Saturday morning's breakfast we could afford a dinner and room at Caen and sightseeing there.

So it was that after looking at Queen Mathilde's tapestry at Bayeux we were trundling along in the rain early Saturday afternoon, on an extremely bad road a few miles from Cherbourg. To the small boy who helped me patch a puncture I presented our very last item of cash — a wet and ragged five-franc note. We entered Cherbourg without a sou and checked in at the little hotel on the inner basin — I recall it as The Grand Hotel de France et Angleterre, and the proprietor and his wife were saving up to add a bath tub to the premises someday — where

we had spent our first night in France some months earlier.

The quantity of our luggage was still impressive, and so was the bright red *moto* and its exploding exhaust. We were received as befitted rich and distinguished strangers, and we ordered a hearty luncheon sent up — an omelet, channel sole, *bifteck*, Amer Picon, and wine. On Monday, I reasoned, I would pick up money at the Credit Lyonnaise; we would live meanwhile at, or rather on, the hotel, and this we did in great style.

I was disconcerted Monday morning, on going to the Credit Lyonnaise, to find that no one there had ever heard of me and that there was most certainly nothing in the way of money awaiting me. (It had been cabled in dollars, I learned later, with the result that dollars were being sent down from Paris by mail, too late for our schedule.) We were simply out of funds, a hotel bill was in the making, and the boat sailed the next day.

At this point, with a maximum of exhaust noise, I rode the Indian around to the baggagemaster. A Frenchman, he was mightily attracted by the Indian, whereas on our arrival his counterpart, an Englishman, had seemed more aloof. I told the Frenchman that I was shipping the Indian out the next day on the *Leviathan*, produced our tickets, and we chatted amiably about the pleasures of France.

I remarked, as casually as possible,

that I was slightly pressed for francs for a few final odds and ends. Perhaps he could provide me with a small sum and put it on the motorcycle's bill of lading, to be paid in New York, I suggested. In return for the convenience, I said, I would be glad to accept 20 francs for the dollar instead of the going rate of 22.

The instantaneous success of my proposal staggered me. Reaching into his pocket, the baggagemaster whipped out a fat sheaf of notes. How much was desired? He looked at me eagerly. I was most anxious not to frighten him, here at the crux of it all, and I managed to say offhandedly that around a thousand francs would be enough.

The money was in my clutch immediately, not the largest but certainly the most welcome bit of cash I had touched in many a day. I signed a chit for it and went back to the hotel, kicking myself for not having spoken for more.

The forty-odd dollars proved to be just right. We paid the hotel bill, bought galoshes and woolen underwear for the drive over the road from New York to Omaha (in mid-November), and invested the rest shrewdly in cognac and chartreuse. Our last 20-franc note we gave to the porter who put our luggage on the tender, and we boarded ship, as any young couple should on leaving France, without a copper between us.

CHARLES W. MORTON

RENÉ CHAR

L'UNE ET L'AUTRE

*Qu'as-tu à te balancer sans fin, rosier, par longue pluie, avec
ta double rose?*

Comme deux guêpes mûres elles restent sans vol.

Je les vois de mon coeur, car mes yeux sont fermés.

Mon amour au-dessus des fleurs n'a laissé que vent et nuage.

ONE AND THE OTHER

What has taken you, rose tree, endlessly to sway, under
the long rains with your double roses?

Like two ripe wasps they stay, in no flight.

I see them with my heart, for my eyes are closed.

My love, above flowers, has left only wind and cloud.

Translated by E. S. YNTEMA

The Châteaux of France

Some Pros and Cons

BY RAYMOND COGNAT

One of the foremost art critics in France, RAYMOND COGNAT is principal inspector for the Beaux-Arts and writes regularly for FIGARO. He has written books on Gauguin, Van Gogh, and Cézanne.

A French expression that the English stole from us years ago defines mirages as "castles in Spain," no doubt by way of contrast to those in France, which are a very tangible reality. In France there are literally thousands of châteaux; they are so multitudinous that no one knows what to do with them, so diverse in style that no one knows how to classify them, and in such a state of disrepair that no one knows how to preserve them.

Almost every village has at least one château and often several. If for some reason it has none, the title of château is conferred on the lordliest house in the neighborhood, for it is imperative that the milker, the baker, the butcher be able to say to their clients with a detached, superior air: "This is for the château."

The château is an indispensable element in the social life of France. It is watched over with respectful jealousy by the villagers, and these sentiments in turn make those inhabiting it proud. Usually it is the château which marks its occupants, and not they who stamp their character upon it. You take possession of the château as a bourgeois of more or less important means; once installed, you become a chatelain or chatelaine. If you give up the château, you become a simple bourgeois again.

The châteaux of France, then, occupy a very important place in our society; they pose numerous problems and engross the attentions of many people.

Now let us begin by listing the people who are interested in châteaux. First of all, there are those

who want to do away with them. Three centuries ago Richelieu managed to demolish quite a few. Most of them were medieval fortresses, for the Renaissance châteaux didn't annoy him much and those of the eighteenth century had not yet been built.

After Richelieu the French nobility went on tearing down the châteaux in order to replace them with newer ones. Then the Revolution burned a good many just for the fun of it. In the nineteenth century, contractors and entrepreneurs of public works dismantled quite a number in order to use their stones for constructing roads and apartment buildings. Then industry replaced a lot of them with factories and workers' settlements. The city planners are now the chief hope left for achieving a total destruction, under the sound pretext of slum clearance.

Such, then, are the principal categories of people who have been, are, or will be interested in having châteaux disappear. There are also those who are interested in preserving what is left of them. These can be classified into eight categories:

1. Rich people, who like to acquire noble mansions and become chatelains. They put in central heating and bathtubs; sell the old wainscoting, which is then wedged into modern houses; dismantle the huge stone fireplaces, which are eventually installed in peasant cottages bought for weekend jaunts.

2. Poor people, for whose benefit the château is transformed into an old-age home or sanatorium. The people themselves are lodged in the attics, because the apartments of state, where these poor souls would feel utterly out of place, are reserved for the administration.

3. Tourists, the flood of whom is regularly nourished by Gargantuan

super-buses. These tourists drag themselves dismally from one room to the next, surreptitiously perching on shaky chairs, which now and then collapse. They paw the painting on decorated doors to see if it still holds up under the spotting of anonymous fingers like their own. Now and then they succeed in inscribing a name or a date, or even manage to



tear off a piece of molding to keep as a souvenir of this faded beauty.

4. Army general staffs on maneuvers, who naturally prefer châteaux to field tents and who rejoice at their own ingenuity every time they cut through the beautiful woodwork to install a telephone line or enthrone a typewriter on a Louis XVI commode.

5. Antique dealers, who come to the aid of penniless proprietors by lending them pieces of furniture or objects of recent authenticity which visiting guests might be more tempted to buy here than in city antique shops.

6. The personnel of the Monuments Historiques Commission, who replace worn-out stones one after another, but not all at once (for then it would look like a brand new château), and who, no matter what they do, are targets of general vituperation. This, however, is part of their function, and it provides journalists with first-rate polemical material.

7. Lovers of the past, who want to preserve everything because everything antedating 1850 or 1800 is *ipso facto* beautiful and must be saved for the people, who couldn't care less.

8. Enemies of the government. There are two approaches to the problems posed by the châteaux: one in favor of their conservation, the other opposed to it. The second of these seems, at first sight, the easier alternative to adopt. It re-



quires no initiative. You just let time and the châteaux-phobes take care of things. But the ease of this solution is really illusory, for very soon those who were thought to be the foes of châteaux will cross over into the camp of their defenders, since they will have lost the *raison d'être* of their protestations; for what interests the châteaux-phobes is not the châteaux themselves, but the chance they provide for grumbling.

Besides, a château isn't something which disappears overnight. It wears out, runs down, empties itself, and gradually crumbles into a ruin; but a ruin which still goes on living a more or less pathetic life, which cries out for succor, and which becomes an ever more vehement witness to its plight. The more anguished its cries, the more partisans flock to its rescue. To rob it of its power, it must be destroyed completely, and not one stone must be left standing on another, so that men forget it ever existed. Even then, this may not suffice. And then, if châteaux were to disappear completely, what substitute could be offered to châteaux-lovers, tourists, and army staffs, to say nothing of their enemies? Others would have to be built.

So it seems easier to conserve those which exist. But here we run into a major financial problem. Over the centuries each up-and-coming French family has built a château without always taking the

precaution to remove those built in earlier centuries. We thus find ourselves in possession of more châteaux than there are rich families capable of maintaining them. To make things worse, the wealthy, not wishing to appear unprogressive, continue to build sumptuous modern dwellings, so that they can have them photographed and publicized in illustrated magazines.

The impoverished old families thus have to get along as best they can with patchwork repairs intended to keep the rain from pouring in through the roof, the windows from flying open at the first sigh of the wind, and the chimneys from toppling on innocent strollers. Weighed down by these financial burdens, they appeal to the state, which is duty bound to conserve the national heritage but which is allotted such a puny budget for doing so that it distributes its dole only to classified monuments it thinks worth while maintaining.

When the state classifies a monument, it undertakes to cover an important part of the costs of reparation and even of upkeep. The state, however, demands — with a certain logic — that all repairs be made under its control, in order to keep fake reconstructions, lapses of taste, or technical blunders from marring the authentic character of an ancient mansion. This requires specialists, and the work of the specialists costs far more than the labor of the local

contractor or mason. The percentage the owner has to cover out of his own pocket thus often exceeds what he would have had to pay without any state aid at all.

But suppose now that our château is saved, classified, restored, admired, gleaming new in its ancient glory! It takes its solemn place in the textbooks, in the Michelin guide, in collections of post cards. But what are we going to do with it? We already have enough museums.

There remains one final solution, though I am not sure whether it should be classed in the department of destruction or in that of conservation. This is the purchase of châteaux by American millionaires, who dismantle them stone by stone, ship them to the United States, and then respectfully remount them, homesick and solitary though they are, far from their native land. When one visits the New York Cloisters, one cannot help experiencing a certain malaise before this renaissance of emigrated stones and the tender respect they are surrounded with. Doubtless they are better off; they are more alive there than they would be, left to languish in an indifferent environment. They are not dead, and yet they are a little drowsy, like exiles timidly reunited to evoke their common past in silence. This disconcerting existence is still preferable to death, but it is no longer the story of the châteaux of France.

JULES SUPERVIELLE

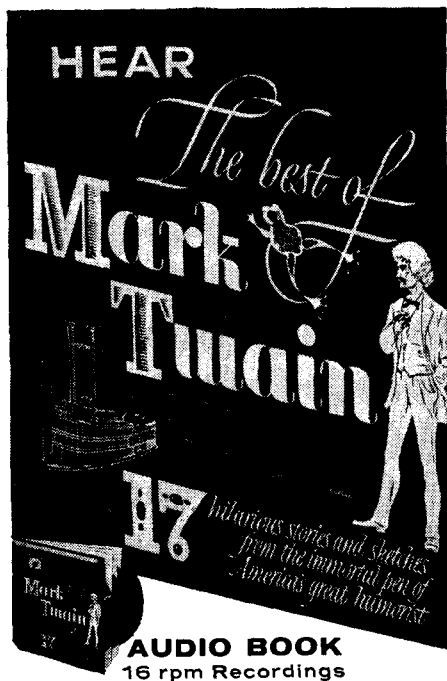
AÉRIEN BESTIAIRE

*Enfants de lions, nuages joyeux,
Vous couvrez les cieux de vos joyeux bonds,
Vous qui lacérez d'éclairs et de griffes
Les moutons du ciel dans leur frêle esquif,
Enfants de lions, vous faites rugir
Vos flancs gris gonflés par de grosses pluies.
Aigles du nadir sautant de vos sphères
Vous foncez soudain jusqu'au bas des cieux,
Zébrés du zénith hennissant du feu
Sous d'abruptes dents qui tous désespèrent,
Mammifères du ciel, rayonnant bestiaire,
Insectes, mouches d'or, oisillons de mille feux
Vous êtes d'anciens dieux aux durables colères
Qui, vos temples détruits, vivez de ciel en cieux.*

FAUNA OF THE SKY

Children of lions, you bright clouds
Compass all heaven in a joyous leap;
Your claws a lightning flash, you rip
At fleeing, wan, celestial sheep.
Vast rains now swelling your gray sides,
Children of lions, terribly you roar.
Now nadir-eagles, plunging from your sphere
You dive in a sudden rush to heaven's floor.
Abruptly nipped by wicked teeth that sear
You, zenith-zebras whinny your despair.
Oh, radiant fauna, mammals of high heaven,
Bugs, golden flies, birds bright with manifold fire:
Old gods, your temples down, forever driven
From heaven to heaven in your durable ire.

Translated by E. S. YNTEMA



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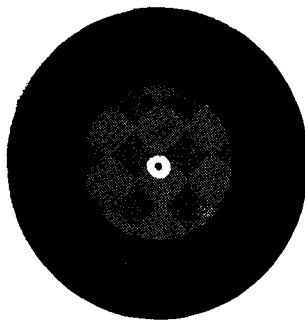


STRATEGY and COMPROMISE

The noted historian, Admiral Samuel Eliot Morison, scrutinizes the great strategic decisions which came before the American Joint Chiefs of Staff and their British counterparts in the hazardous years of 1940-1945. Roosevelt and Churchill, General Marshall, Admiral King, Lord Alanbrooke, Sir John Dill are shown as they spoke their minds. \$3.00

An Atlantic Monthly Press Book

LITTLE, BROWN & COMPANY



Record Reviews

BY JOHN M. CONLY

Fortunately for the purposes of this special issue, recent weeks have afforded us some very fetching samples of the music of France.

Brand new is a pair of the greatest works of the two greatest Impressionists. I mean, of course, the solitary string quartets of Debussy and Ravel, magnificently performed on Columbia ML-5245 by the world's finest string quartet, four Russians who call themselves Budapest. The same four played the same works on another Columbia LP eight years ago. The playing is the same, but the new reproduction is incomparably better than the old.

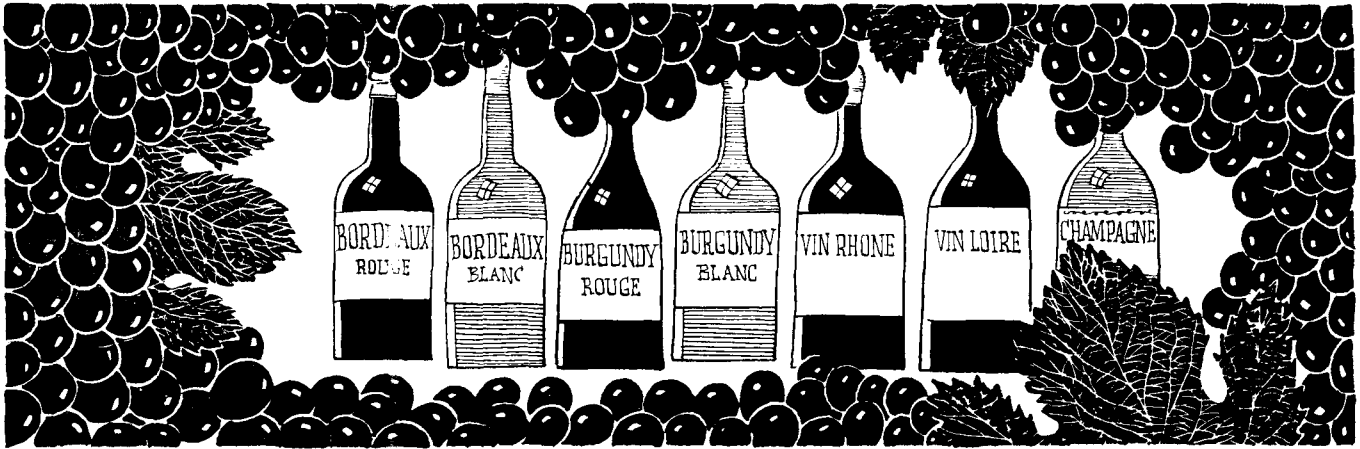
In the field of ballet, we get from Geneva via London (LL-1717/18) the first uncut recording of Delibes's *Coppélia*. It occupies two discs of crystalline sound, in performance by Ernest Ansermet and the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande — and the portions restored to the usually truncated "suite" are just as enchanting as the parts we commonly hear. Delibes spurs no intellectual exercise, but here is a feast of grace and rhythm.

RCA Camden, which is RCA Victor's cut-rate affiliate, does its part with a \$1.98 bargain bouquet called *Music of France* (CAL-385). What it really features is the genius of Pierre Monteux, conducting his beloved San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, which in the course of his tenure he made sound very much like a French ensemble. The music he plays (these are reprints, of course, but good ones) includes Milhaud's symphonic suite *Protée*; the Sarabande from Debussy's *Pour le Piano*, transcribed by Ravel; Berlioz's version of the Rákóczy March; and two works of D'Indy. Altogether, a delightful potpourri.

Some months ago in this column I cheered a version of Camille Saint-Saëns's great Third or "Organ" Symphony by E. Power Biggs, Eugene Ormandy, and the Philadelphia Orchestra, which I thought would not soon be surpassed. I am rather afraid it has been — if not overwhelmingly — by one of those performances we call (for lack of a more exact term) inspired, and which rarely make their way onto records. I do not imply that there was anything happenstance about this. The ground for the inspired performance was the felicitous meeting, under Mercury Records' auspices, of the great Parisian organist Marcel Dupré and the great ex-Parisian conductor of the Detroit Symphony, Paul Paray. I am sure Paray must have known Saint-Saëns, and I know Dupré did; indeed he once pulled stops for the composer playing the organ part in this very work. The symphony was the answer posed by Saint-Saëns, a Romantic and a strict symphonist, to the Impressionists; a huge, singing, jovial thunder. Certainly Saint-Saëns would have thought his point well made in this Mercury version (MG-50167) which, by the way, owes no small part of its effect to the faultless microphone balance achieved by recording engineer C. Robert Fine.

The hectic years of the Second Empire and the Third Republic comprised France's great era of operetta. Even the Franco-Prussian War and the siege of Paris could not halt the production of these spicy, naughty musicals. Most prolific of their composers was Charles Lecocq, who wrote at least forty works in the genre. He was a protégé of Offenbach, and there is some similarity in what they wrote, though Offenbach had satiric inclinations. Lecocq seems to have lacked. His operettas are pure fun. The most popular of them (400 performances at the Opéra-Comique alone) was *La Fille de Madame Angot*, whereof we now are offered a record of "highlights" assembled by Epic (LC-3424). The plot of this opus is so nearly incomprehensible that it is as well heard in excerpts as any other way. And the French pronunciation of the disc's artists (I suspect that they are Opéra-Comique people) under Jesus Etcheverry is so clear that a translation script won't be missed. The melodies are as bubbly as Champagne.

pleasures and places



WINES OF FRANCE TODAY

BY ALEXIS LICHINE

In the heart of the greatest wine country in the world, the fruitful vineyards of Bordeaux, Burgundy, and Champagne lay in their winter sleep — this was February, 1956. They were, as the sudden deadly frost was to prove, more vulnerable than the growers, even *les vieux*, had ever known. Within a few hours old vines which had been thirty to fifty years maturing and young vines full of promise were stricken down, paralyzed with cold. The icebound silence that followed was broken only by the growers crying “catastrophe”; sometimes a man was seen in the middle of his ruined work actually in tears. There had not been such a disaster since the 1880s, when the vines were destroyed by the burrowing plant louse, *phylloxera*.

Many splendid old vines of Saint-Émilion and other districts were frozen to death. The sturdy younger plants survived; but while these produce wines in quantity, wines of quality come from the old vines. (In terms of quality and quantity together, a vineyard is most productive when the vines are between

ten and twenty-five years old.) In 1956, the harvest inevitably was small, and the quality of the vintage is variable. But in no year is the wine so uniformly good or bad as the amateur of vintage charts might suppose. Looking up 1954, for instance, he will find the Bordeaux low rated and low priced. Here is an example of how you may make a good buy in a reputedly bad year, for, although the summer of 1954 was poor, on September 6 the sun came out and kept shining through the harvest. This last month of sunshine is the most important of all for the grapes; and some of the 1954s, which many shippers shunned because rumor had condemned them in advance, are in fact early-maturing wines of fine balance, low in tannin and therefore without the bitterness which makes for the slower development of a more lasting wine. Many of these are pleasanter to drink today than the greater vintages of 1952, 1953, and 1955 — and considerably cheaper. One example is the soft Château Lascombes 1954. And if you take the advice of a reliable wine merchant and choose carefully,

you will eventually enjoy drinking some of the clarets of 1956.

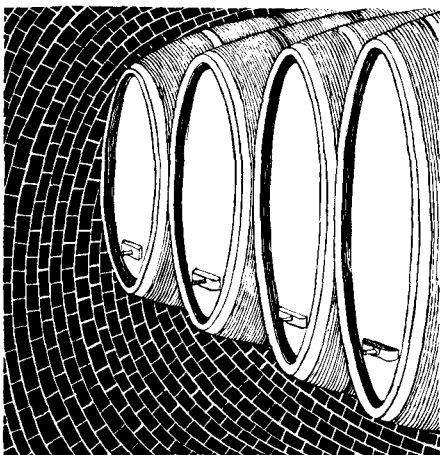
In the vineyard calendar there are three crucial stages: when the young shoots sprout, when the vines come into flower, and harvesttime and the period just preceding. The enemies are spring frost, summer wind and rain, hail, and frost again, early in October. In 1957, the surviving vines were weakened by the previous year's frost and by the way the growers had been forced to trim and tie the unproductive shoots, to restore the vigor of the plants. There was frost in May. Then came June, the flowering time, when the size of the vintage is determined and each grower sweats out his overall annual income. The month was wet and cold, and there was no resistance in the sickly vines. The four varieties of grape, *petit verdot*, *merlot*, *cabernet franc*, and *cabernet sauvignon*, which combine with the different local soils to give the Médoc wines their characteristic flavors flowered sparsely and unevenly, in the wrong order. The result was a tiny crop. By harvesttime tragic losses throughout the vineyards of France and Europe became apparent — the more disastrous since there had been an unexpected, wonderful Indian summer, making excellent the little wine produced. In Bordeaux, the Médoc produced only 50 per cent of its normal yield, and Saint-Émilion 40 per cent. In southern Burgundy,

Beaujolais and Pouilly-Fuissé were down to one third of the normal harvest; the Côte de Beaune, Pomard, and such fine white Burgundies as Puligny-Montrachet, Chassagne-Montrachet, and Meursault yielded 60 per cent, while Champagne dropped as low as 30 per cent.

The greatest tragedy, however, fell upon the little town of Chablis, where about eight hundred people live for their wine. Here, when the sap had risen in the vines, a late May frost destroyed all hope for the harvest; the growers salvaged less than 10 per cent of the crop, and this was bad. There could never be so much Chablis made as there are bottles labeled Chablis on restaurant tables, and we shall not see much true estate-bottled Chablis for some time to come — although, fortunately for the growers and for us, in this small region of Burgundy 1955 and 1956 were both good years.

As supplies fail, the demand for wine is growing steadily, because all over the civilized world more people are drinking wine every year — and so prices will continue to rise. Yet it is not too late to find, either in the United States or in Europe, good wines at a reasonable price, both for drinking now and for laying down.

Inexpensive Bordeaux, the regional wines, shipper's bottlings such as Médoc, Saint-Julien, Margaux, Saint-Émilion, or inexpensive château-bottled wines of the *cru bourgeois* are good buys. There are many



unheard-of names, but if properly selected, they may be good wines.

Many of the excellent purchases in red Bordeaux are the 1955 classified growths of the second, third, fourth, and fifth classes. Growth in the 1952 and 1953 vintages which are still available, such as the following, are superior: Château Las-

combes, Château Pichon-Longueville, Château Palmer, Château Ducru-Beaucaillou, Château Calon-Ségur, Château Prieuré-Lichine, and Château Lynch-Bages. These château bottlings are especially good buys because the prices originally paid for 1952s and 1953s were low.

The Rosés in the United States are still cheap, such as Tavel 1955 and the more expensive 1957. Sancerre, Quincy, and the Vouvray are the best wines of the Loire valley, and they should not be older than four years. The best of the white Burgundies are the Pouilly-Fuissés and Puligny-Montrachets of the 1955 vintage. The best of the Graves are the château-bottled Couhins, Domaine de Chevalier, and Carbonnieux of the 1955 vintage.

For the typical fruity, flowery Beaujolais, one should look to the 1957s. They will be making their appearance in the bottle beginning this summer and will be available for the next year or two. The best names are Moulin-à-Vent, Fleurie, and Brouilly. These are the top villages of the Beaujolais.

No short list can be made of the great wines of France, and red Burgundies certainly cannot be overlooked. But it is preferable to look for the phrase "estate-bottled" on the label, or the name of a grower followed by the word *propriétaire* — the maker. Clearly, with prices always going up, this is not a time to learn by error how to buy wine. But by following a few simple rules, it should be possible from the start to avoid the more obvious traps. Some of the bottles of wine on sale are indeed frauds — adulterated concoctions untruthfully labeled. In the wine trade, as in others, there are bound to be some crooks. But with the laws of *appellations d'origine*, the French government and the growers themselves have made it very difficult for such deceptions to be practiced on any but the most unsuspecting customer. According to the laws, the quantity and quality of wine in each vineyard are controlled by a local board, and so is the use of place names; every bottle from these controlled areas must bear on its label the words *Appellation Contrôlée*. One set of rules defines regional wines, and there is an Appellation Contrôlée of Burgundy. A district wine is better than a regional one; that is, a Côte de Nuits is better than one marked simply "Bourgogne"

— therefore the district rules are more strictly defined. Commune wines such as Gevrey-Chambertin rate higher still; and the Appellation Contrôlée of a specific vineyard, like Chambertin, is defined by the most exact regulations of all.

In Bordeaux the wines are grown in vineyards belonging to one owner



or partnership, and the *grands crus* are bottled at the châteaux and labeled accordingly, *mis en bouteilles au château*. Therefore, you can be sure that the wine has not been blended with a lesser growth after it left the château. "Bordeaux" or other wines bearing only a regional name, such as "Saint-Julien" or "Pomerol," are bought in barrel, blended and bottled by a shipper. Although this is certainly inferior wine, there are some reliable merchants whose wines may occasionally be quite satisfactory.

In Burgundy there are practically no châteaux, and the vineyards are divided into small holdings. Formerly, each grower followed the general practice of selling his barrels of wine to the shippers or big merchants who blended them to make each vintage a consistent wine of the vineyard. But now growers have begun estate-bottling at least part of their vintage, and the name of the proprietor or grower on the label, or the words *mise au domaine* or *mise en bouteilles à la propriété*, is the best guarantee of this fine wine for which the demand so vastly exceeds the supply — the whole region of the Burgundy vineyards covers an area of scarcely 12,000 acres. Nothing, unfortunately, but experience of the different growths can protect one from the practice, not illegal but regrettable, of oversugaring, or chap-talizing, Burgundy, since this is done to satisfy an increasing demand for heavy, rich, full-bodied wines.

An honest wine merchant will save you from fraudulent wine and help you to pick a good bottle at the price you want to pay; if he knows his business, he will from time to time buy up a stock at a reasonable figure, which he will pass on to his customers. He will tell you, too, that it is safer to depend on reputable estate and château bottling than on the half-truths of a vintage chart, which will give you the great years but not the date on which the wine will be at its best. A great Bordeaux, ripened in constant sunshine, will be rich in sugar and hence in alcohol; and the wine of a memorable vintage may have an overabundance of the bitter tannin which will hold it together over the years until, slowly, it reaches perfection. The vintage chart will rate a 1945 very high but will not tell you when to drink it, and to have tasted a bottle of this great wine in 1949 would not have been the pleasure it should be in 1960.

It is possible to find good red wines in medium years, but this seldom applies to white wines, for which a minimum degree of sunshine is essential. Otherwise, excessive acidity will throw them out of balance. So this much may be said for vintage charts: they are better guides to white wines than to red. The chart, like the dictionary of a foreign language, is a good servant but a bad master. However, it can have its uses, and the following chart is the most accurate and dependable in view of its limited scope. All wines are rated on a point basis, 20 being the maximum which equals divine perfection.

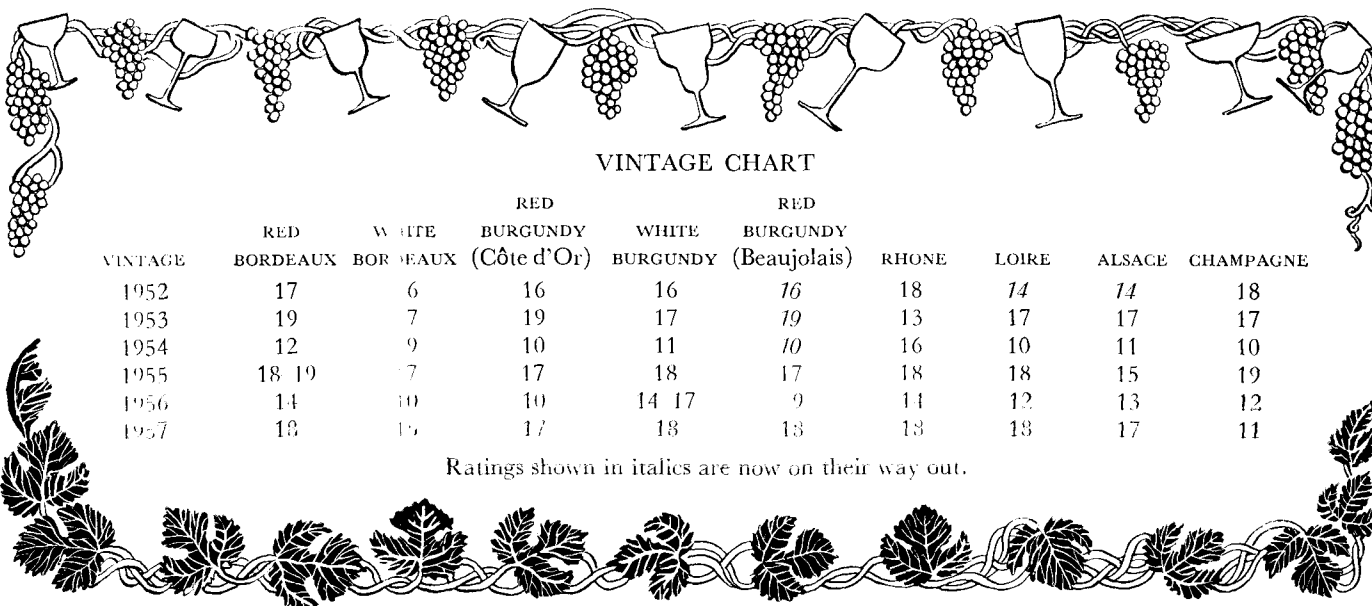
The great 1955 red Bordeaux were bottled last winter. The red Burgundies of 1955 are already enjoyable. The 1956 and 1957 red wines are for the future. Except for the Beaujolais, they have not yet been bottled. All over France people are drinking more and more Beaujolais, and Americans will do so this summer, in spite of the pitiful harvest of 1957. Except in the great growths, the tendency today is to drink young wines, and the younger Beaujolais is consumed, the better. Much of the cheaper Beaujolais is, unfortunately, blended with the lesser Rhone wines, the *ordinaires* of the Midi, and a mixture of Algerian wines. The true young Beaujolais mostly find their way to Paris and to Lyon — into this gourmet city, they say, three rivers flow: the Rhone, the Saône, and the Beaujolais.

In a French café, when you order Beaujolais *sur le zinc* (that is, up at the zinc counter) you get what is called a Beaujolais *bourru*; this should be a fresh, fruity wine from the barrel. Juliéna is a pleasant carafe wine of this type. The average Beaujolais is bottled early, but this region has its great wines, too: Moulin-à-Vent, full as Beaujolais goes and much of it sent for export; Brouilly; Morgon, the longest lasting; Fleurie, a fruity wine at its best when it is young and slightly chilled, a favorite in the United States. The French themselves may prefer Chiroubles even to Moulin-à-Vent, but this wine, the bad traveler, is seldom seen abroad. In 1957 very little Beaujolais was made, but the *grands crus* are wonderfully good. This sometimes happens in years when

the vines produce quality rather than quantity: the goodness is condensed into those few grapes in each bunch which still could be harvested.

The way to get to know French wine, and French people, is to potter about the country with a car, stopping sometimes at a bistro or at a small hotel where the *patron* may do his own cooking and come in halfway through dinner to ask how you are enjoying your meal. Don't stay at one hotel and go out to dine at another; in the country places, there will be hurt feelings if you do. Incidentally, if you start off by supposing that the French are all connoisseurs because they drink wine as a matter of course and without the esoteric rites of wine snobs in Anglo-Saxon countries, you will be disappointed. Some of the worst wine you'll ever taste may possibly be in Paris — and not the *ordinaire*, either. In many of the average restaurants, the wine lists are downright bad. As a rule, you will be better off with a château-bottled Bordeaux or a carafe of Beaujolais than with any of the mediocre bottles in between.

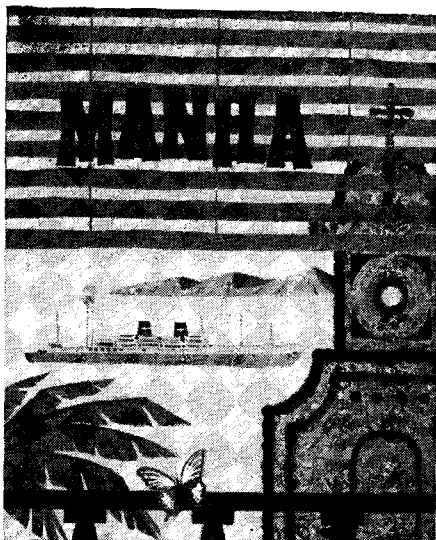
In the country, then, unless you are visiting a famous place like the Hôtel de la Côte d'Or or Alexandre Dumaine at Saulieu, by all means ask for the *vins du pays*, which in this case are great Burgundies. You will be able to make your own gastronomic chart of France, or at least of one section of the country. For instance, I can think of no more agreeable holiday for a fairly greedy man than one spent in leisurely travel with a motorcar through the Southwest: beginning with Chartres, whose cathedral is the Gothic marvel



VINTAGE CHART

VINTAGE	RED	WHITE	RED	WHITE	RED	RHONE	LOIRE	ALSACE	CHAMPAGNE
	BORDEAUX	BORDEAUX	BURGUNDY (Côte d'Or)	BURGUNDY	BURGUNDY (Beaujolais)				
1952	17	6	16	16	<i>16</i>	18	<i>14</i>	<i>14</i>	18
1953	19	7	19	17	<i>19</i>	13	17	17	17
1954	12	9	10	11	<i>10</i>	16	10	11	10
1955	18 19	7	17	18	17	18	18	15	19
1956	14	10	10	14 17	9	11	12	13	12
1957	13	15	17	18	13	13	13	17	11

Ratings shown in italics are now on their way out.



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of France, going as far south as Albi and Toulouse — in both of which are extraordinary examples of Romanesque architecture — then turning back through Agen to Bordeaux and the legendary vineyards of Sauternes, Graves, Médoc, and Saint-Émilion.

This trip will take you through the placid park-like landscape of the Loire valley, strung with châteaux built by kings and their competing nobles when the court of the Valois passed much of its time in Touraine. You might stop at Amboise to see the castle on the cliff and the marvelous view and to taste, at the Hôtel de Choiseul, some of the delicious dishes *à la tourangelle*, the *rillettes* from neighboring Tours, or the sturdy peasant foods, *boudin* (blood sausage) and *terrine de lapin*. All go equally well with the light delightful wine of Vouvray, cellared in the caves of chalky cliffs. As you go on through the valley, there will be other wines to taste: Sancerre and, most charming of all, Pouilly-Fumé, a dry, distinctive white with a taste of truffles from the soil that breeds it. From Chinon, in the other direction, where Rabelais was born, come the red and pink wines he loved: Chinon and Bourgueil. Saumur produces a sparkling white; the pink and white wines of Anjou are fragrant and sweet. In the Dordogne, the French are still eating the rich truffled *foie gras* of Périgord and drinking the heady but rather mediocre white Bergeracs; you may taste the local Monbazillac, which is a very sweet dessert wine.

In Cahors, with its famous fortified bridge, the feeling of the South is stronger still; here the "black" wines are made — "wine-dark" indeed, and long-lived — which have often been used to add color and body to other, weaker growths. On to Albi, near the vineyards of Blanquette de Limoux, where the little sparkling wines are sometimes oversparked.

The older buildings of Toulouse are rose-pink; and here is found the Basilique of Saint Sernin, the oldest of all the Romanesque churches. To the north are the vineyards of Gaillac, making a wretched wine which seems to have been better in the Middle Ages than the sweetish whites which come from there today. (Tastes have changed too.) Driving west again, through Agen, at Langon (Sauternes) and Barsac (sweet white

wines) you are at last in the wonderful wine country of the Gironde.

A wine pilgrimage through Bordeaux is the proper climax to such a gastronomic tour, and it is easily organized, since visitors are welcomed at the famous châteaux which, before, have only been names on labels to most tourists. At Château Lascombes, in the village of Margaux some fifteen miles up into the Médoc, guests need no introductions. Thousands of them knock at the door every year and are taken round to taste the wine and to see the vineyards where it is grown and the *chais* where it is made.

The quality of a wine depends on the soil, the weather, and the man who makes it. In the Gironde, the fine soil is limestone, sand, some clay, and mainly gravel, which gives its name to the good Graves wine. The weather means not only wet or fine, but the amount of sunshine, direct or reflected, which strikes the grapes at any angle. This is why, in Burgundy, the vineyards are called *climats*; and why one small holder in a vineyard may have his grapes more fully ripened by the sun than one of his neighbors, whose barrels also go into the communal vintage. As for the man who makes the wine, he must have an extra sense to tell him when to pick and when to press — and he usually seems to have this.

From Château Lascombes and the neighboring Château Prieuré-Lichine, visitors regularly go to famous neighboring vineyards: Château Margaux, with its beautiful classical façade; Château Mouton-Rothschild, with its dark, candle-lighted cellars; and, in the town of Saint-Julien, the lovely seventeenth-century Château Beychevelle overlooking the River Gironde.

Here in the heart of the Médoc the great wines come alive, a way of life begins, and the châteaux with their vines take on personalities that stay a lifetime with traveler and resident alike. Only in the wine country, with a few tastings and a few visits to famous *chais*, is the amateur transformed to expert.

An internationally recognized authority on fine wines, ALEXIS LICHINE owns, with a group of other wine-loving Americans, such famous vineyard properties in the Bordeaux region as Château Prieuré-Lichine and Château Lascombes, as well as several vineyards in Burgundy. He is the author of WINES OF FRANCE, and his ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE WINES AND SPIRITS OF THE WORLD will soon be published.



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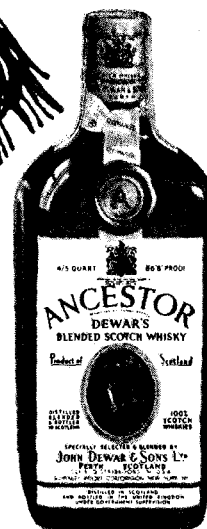


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